ATHENIAN LETTERS:

OR, THE

Epiſtolary Correſpondence

OF AN

AGENT of the King of PERSIA,

RESIDING AT

ATHENS during the Peloponneſian War.

CONTAINING

The HISTORY of the Times, in Diſpatches to the Miniſters of State at the Perſian Court.

BESIDES

LETTERS on various Subjects between Him and His Friends.

VOL. II.

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ATHENIAN LETTERS.

OR,

The epiſtolary correſpondence of an agent of the king of Perſia, reſiding at Athens, during the Peloponneſian war.

A. M. 3576. *1ſt year of the* 88*th Olymp.*

The fourth year of the Peloponneſian war.

LETTER LVII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. From Athens.

IN a former * letter, noble Scribe, I laid before thee ſome account of the three chief branches of the Athenian conſtitution, the ſenate of 500, the aſſembly of the people, and the Areopagus. The ſubject is ſo far from being exhauſted, that I ſhall proceed to give thee a further view into the nature of their civil government, and the different juriſdictions of the magiſtrates. Thou muſt have already obſerved, that the form of all theſe republican conſtitutions is

* Letter XIII.

pretty complex, and the legiſlative as well as executive power divided into a great number of hands, in order to preſerve that equality of conditions, and rotation of authority, which they look upon as the baſis and chief ſecurity of their liberties.

The nine Archons, with all the other magiſtrates of the ſtate, enter upon their reſpective charges the firſt day of the month Hecatombæon, which begins the year, and is celebrated with ſolemn ſacrifices, and all other expreſſions of rejoicing.

The Archons are elected by lot; but before they are admitted to the exerciſe of their offices, are obliged to undergo a double examination in the ſenate and forum, and to take a very ſtrict oath in the royal portico. The firſt in the commiſſion, who by way of preheminence is called the Archon, gives name to the year, determines in all cauſes of wills and legacies, and regulates the diverſions of the theatre. To the ſecond, (who probably in memory of their kings is ſtyled Baſileus) the care of religion, the conduct of the prieſts, and the inſpection of the Eleuſinian myſteries are committed. The Polemarchus, or general, who is the third, has under his management the diſcipline of the troops, and the care of the ſtrangers reſiding at Athens, over whom he exerciſes a kind of judicial authority. Six go under the common title of Theſmothetæ, and are the guardians of the laws. It is their duty to ſee, that none are enacted, but ſuch as conduce to the public good. All controverſies in matters of trade fall under their cognizance, and they have the honourable diſtinction of regiſtring public leagues and contracts. If

either

either of the three principal magiſtrates, by reaſon of his youth, is leſs ſkilled in the laws and cuſtoms of his country, it is uſual for him to chuſe two perſons of age, experience, and reputation, as his aſſiſtants, who are called Paredroi. The Nomothetæ are a thouſand in number. Their office is from time to time to inſpect the old laws; and if they find any, that are grown obſolete, contradictory, or uſeleſs, to lay the matter before the people for their determination. The Strategoi, or generals of their armies, are ten in number, one out of every tribe. They have each a day of command in their turns. I will not enter into a tireſome detail of the other magiſtracies amongſt the Athenians: it is ſufficient to ſay, that they are very numerous, and ſhare amongſt them the different branches of power, from the care of the public revenues to that of regulating the women's apparel, and providing lights and torches at public entertainments.

At the end of the year, the magiſtrates, who go out of office, are obliged to give in a ſtrict account of their conduct to the people. The Areopagus, the Senate, the Trierarchs, in ſhort every public officer, who is either choſen by lot in the temple of THESEUS, or voted for by the extenſion of hands in the aſſemblies of the people, is obliged to undergo a ſevere examination of his behaviour, before he is entitled either to any honorary mark of diſtinction, or reward for his ſervices. And what is much ſtronger, the law enjoins, that till he has performed this duty, he ſhall not be permitted to conſecrate his patrimony to religious uſes, make any offering to the gods, or be adopted into

another family, or even diſpoſe of his effects by will. In a word, the accountable magiſtrate can no longer be ſaid to enjoy the property of his poſſeſſions, but is actually ſuſpended from a power of diſpoſing them, till it appears, that he has acquitted himſelf like a good citizen in the ſervices committed to his care.

There is nothing deſerves more attention in the Athenian conſtitution, than the nature of their courts of juſtice, and the manner of their judiciary proceſs. Beſides what I formerly mentioned of the Areopagus, I ſhall here add ſome further particulars relating to it, and ſhall conclude with a brief account of their other tribunals. The judges of the Areopagus have three ſtated meetings every month; when they are met, they divide themſelves into different committees, to each of which a certain number of cauſes are aſſigned by lot. They uſe this method of proceeding, that every one of the judges being ignorant what particular cauſe will be referred to his determination, may lie under no biaſs from intereſt or corruption. Before the trial begins, the plaintiff and defendant by ſolemn oaths call the gods to witneſs the ſincerity of their proceedings. The former is placed upon a ſilver ſtool, called the ſtool of *Injury*; the latter upon another, called the ſtool of *Innocence*. Then the pleadings begin, which the parties ſometimes compoſe themſelves, but generally employ ſome orator to place their arguments in the moſt advantageous light. They are limited as to the time of ſpeaking, and are tied down to ſtate only the plain matter of fact, and reaſon from it, without uſing either rhetorical embelliſhments to amuſe, or moving

expreſſions

expreſſions to raiſe the compaſſion of the judges. After the cauſe has been fully heard, the judges give their opinions: thoſe, who acquit the defendant, caſt their votes into a brazen urn; thoſe, who condemn him, caſt theirs into one of wood. When the ſuffrages are equal, the ſide, which is favourable to the priſoner, is always taken. If the caſe is not capital, he names himſelf the puniſhment, which he thinks he has deſerved, and the judges determine it from his opinion. The ſentences of this court have always been held in the higheſt veneration, for their exact conformity to the laws; and its members are in ſuch repute for wiſdom and integrity, that foreign ſtates have ſubmitted their differences to their arbitration; particularly the Meſſenians made that offer to the Spartans, when thoſe two ſtates were at variance. The Athenians themſelves ſay, that let any one of an irregular diſſolute courſe of life be admitted into this court, he immediately lays aſide his former vicious inclinations, and is adopted as it were into the virtues, as well as the number of that venerable tribunal. Beſides the Areopagus the Athenians have four other courts, which take cognizance of capital offences, called the Palladian, the Delphinian, the Prytanean, and the Phreatian. The firſt of theſe was rendered by DRACO ſuperior to the Areopagus, but SOLON afterwards leſſened its power. The number of judges is fifty one. The Delphinian tribunal ſit in the temple of the Delphic Apollo, and try thoſe murders, wherein the fact is owned, but the defence alledges, that the laws gave the accuſed a power of committing it, as in the caſe

of adultery. The Prytaneum is of a very odd conſtitution; and thou wilt imagine I am not in earneſt, when I tell thee of what nature the cauſes are, which come before them. If a piece of wood or ſtone, a ſword, in ſhort any thing inanimate, kills a man either by accident, or the direction of an unknown hand, it is tried before this court, and upon conviction ordered to be caſt out of the territories of Athens. The Phreatian court is ſo called from an ancient hero, and determines the cauſes of ſtrangers, who fly out of their own country for murder, and are apprehended within the limits of the Athenian ſtate.

There are the courts of judicature for criminal cauſes. Thoſe for civil are in number five; but I ſhall not trouble thee with an account of any but the Heliæa, ſo called from its being an open place, and expoſed to the ſun. The judges of this court are appointed by lot out of the body of the people, and their number varies according to the exigency of affairs, being ſometimes reduced to fifty, and at others encreaſed to an hundred. The oath they take is very ſolemn; they ſwear by JUPITER, NEPTUNE, and CERES, to give ſentence according to the laws and the decrees of the people and ſenate of Athens, to maintain the preſent conſtitution, to take no bribes, to hear both ſides impartially, and to ſuffer no man to be elected into any office, who has not given in his accounts. The manner of their judicial proceeding is as follows: after the cauſe has been regiſtred in the court by the proper officer, and a day appointed for an hearing, the indictment of the plaintiff is read by a public crier;

then the defendant may endeavour to wave off entring upon the merits of the caſe, by putting in one of theſe three pleas; firſt, that the time, wherein the accuſation ought to have been preferred, was elapſed; ſecondly, that the ſickneſs of himſelf or principal witneſſes rendered it impoſſible for him to make a proper defence; or laſtly, that he could retort the indictment preferred againſt him upon his adverſary. If theſe pleas are either not offered or not allowed, the cauſe proceeds in the uſual courſe. That the time of the court may not be unneceſſarily taken up, an hour-glaſs of water limits the orations of each. When the pleadings are over, the judges give ſentence, by caſting beans into two urns, which are opened, and a magiſtrate ſtands with a rod in his hand to number the beans, and decides as they come out. The cauſe is no ſooner determined, than a tablet containing the nature of it, and the names of the parties, which during the time of its being in ſuſpence hangs up at a public place, called the heroes ſtatues, is ordered to be taken down. The judges depoſite their ſcepters, the badges of their office, at the temple of LYCUS, and receive the reward of two or three oboli for their ſervice.

From this general view of the Athenian conſtitution in its moſt diſtinguiſhed branches, I believe thou wilt concur with me in opinion, that were its parts leſs complex, and the whole modelled into a narrower compaſs, it would be not only more perfect, but more likely to be durable. The number of the courts of judicature in particular is a great burden to the ſtate, as they tend to break the courſe of juſtice, and render

the progreſs of it expenſive and troubleſome. Many of the poorer ſort procure themſelves to be elected into theſe tribunals for the ſake of the oboli, that are paid them, when they have diſcharged their office. Such arbitrators inflame every trifling difference, inſtead of reconciling it, and add fuel to the litigious and quarrelſome temper of their countrymen. It were to be wiſhed, that the wiſdom of their judges was equal to that of their laws; but an account of them I reſerve for the ſubject of another letter. Farewel.

P.

LETTER LVIII.

GOBRYAS to CLEANDER. From Suſa.

THY laſt diſpatch, as it concerns us very nearly, adds likewiſe in the higheſt degree to the merit of thy ſervices; and the ſpeedy return we make to it from hence will convince thee, that the affair and its conſequences are eſteemed of ſingular importance. Thy letter, by the king's direction, was laid before the ſupream council of ſeven, which thou knoweſt is compoſed of ARTÆUS, preſident of the tribunal of juſtice, ARIMASPES the Archimagus, MEGABYZUS, TERIBAZUS, treaſurer of Perſia, ASPATHINES, maſter of the poſts, INTAPHERNES, and myſelf. The remarkable manner, in which thou cameſt to the knowledge of this treaſonable correſpondence, and the particulars, which thou haſt extracted from the letters themſelves, left us no room to doubt of thy intelligence; and therefore we laid it as our unanimous opinion before

fore the king, that the traitor ſhould be immediately apprehended. At the hour of ſhutting the palace-gates, a party of eunuchs belonging to the guard of the women's apartments arreſted SACAS, and ſecured his papers. Upon examining them it appeared, that ſince PERICLES's death he had deſtroyed the papers, that paſſed between them; there remained only a few letters from MAZEUS, but in them was ſufficient evidence to convict him. For in one he expreſly calls SACAS the *Friend of Athens*; and in another deſires him to tranſmit to PERICLES the terms, on which he would riſe in arms againſt his ſovereign. He was examined the next day before the tribunal of juſtice, but behaved with a ſullen reſerve, till the ſeverity of torture drew from him a confeſſion of his perfidious practices. He would never be induced to ſay, that any other perſon was concerned with him, except one ſlave, whom he had ſent twice with letters to Athens, and poiſoned at his return to prevent a diſcovery. His uſual manner of conveying his diſpatches was, to ſend them encloſed to a merchant of Athens, one PHILO, under a pretence, that they were commiſſions from the ladies of the palace to purchaſe Grecian curioſities. After ſo full a confeſſion, and the written teſtimony of MAZEUS's letters, he was ſentenced to ſuffer capital puniſhment, after the laws of Perſia, and condemned to the * Boat. But in the night, that preceded the day appointed

* The puniſhment of the boat was peculiar to the Perſians, and of a very ſtrange nature. They took two boats framed exactly to fit and anſwer each other. The malefactor,

appointed for his execution, the queen mother, from whoſe ſlave he was firſt advanced to a low office in the palace-gardens, made very preſſing inſtances, that his life ſhould be ſpared, and himſelf condemned only to a perpetual impriſonment at Cyrta upon the Red-ſea. Several ladies of the palace, particularly ARSINOE, the fair Damaſcan, united their intereſts to hers; and our monarch, divided between the reſpect, which he always pays to the leaſt requeſt of his mother, and the prevalence, which love has over the moſt generous natures, on one hand, and the ſafety of his empire, and the inviolable obſervance of juſtice on the other, has ordered the execution to be reſpited. However the miniſters continue to preſs earneſtly, that the laws may take their courſe; and it is urged, that the puniſhment of SACAS may be a real clemency to others, who otherwiſe may be incited to renew the like practices from obſerving, in the preſent caſe, that they are paſſed over with impunity. One traitor is however ſecured; for a courier

factor, who ſuffered, was laid down upon his back in one of them, and covered with the other, in which were holes cut big enough for his head and eyes to appear at. Then they offered him food, which they compelled him to eat by pricking his eyes. The drink they gave him was a mixture of honey and water, pouring it not only down his throat, but over his face, which being kept turned towards the ſun, and beſmeared with this potion, was always covered with vaſt numbers of flies and other inſects. In this teizing and painful condition the criminal generally languiſhed ſeveral days before he expired, and afforded a moſt noiſome ſpectacle to the by-ſtanders. Note by the Tranſlator.

is

is juſt arrived with the head of MAZEUS, the late governor of Phrygia; and orders are diſpatched to put to death ARGESTES, which he already deſerved for his male-adminiſtration of Lydia. I will not conceal from thee, that theſe executions have occaſioned no ſmall faction and intrigue in the court. The friends of SACAS and the relations of MAZEUS and ARGESTES, ſome of whom are of the moſt conſiderable families in the empire, put every method in practice, to inveſtigate from what quarter theſe treaſons were diſcovered. But thou mayſt reſt aſſured, CLEANDER, that thy letters are ſhewn to none but thoſe of the ſecret council; and no care ſhall be omitted, that may contribute towards thy ſafety, which, as long as I have any influence, ſhall be equally ſecure with my own.

PYRACMON the Spartan tells me, that an agent from Lacedemon will ſhortly arrive here, with fuller powers and leſs limited inſtructions. If we ever proceed ſo far with him as to draw up a plan for a league between the Great King and the Lacedemonians, we ſhall inſiſt, that no peace be made with Athens, till they agree to aboliſh that article in CIMON's peace, which reſtrains our navigation. Otherwiſe the aſſiſtance we ſhall afford them will be real and effectual to their advantage; and the obligations they lay themſelves under with regard to us merely nominal.

I have orders from the king to acquaint thee, that whenever the ſcene of buſineſs at Athens requires a leſs particular attendance, thou mayſt take an opportunity of ſurveying the moſt remarkable parts of Greece, and ſend us accounts, as well of the general face of the country,

country, as the cuſtoms and policies of its different ſtates. The time and manner of performing this journey are left to thy judgment; but in order to defray any expences it may occaſion, and to reward thee for thy late ſignal ſervice, TERIBAZUS the treaſurer is directed to tranſmit to thee 2000 Darics by the hands of thy brother the merchant.

P.

LETTER LIX.

CLEANDER to SMERDIS.

IN a former letter * I told thee of an extraordinary philoſopher, who hath appeared within theſe few years in the town of Athens. And as thy attention muſt of courſe be raiſed to hear, that ſo much learning exiſts among the Greeks, it is my deſign in the preſent to give thee an account of ſome, who have been eſteemed in this part of the world for the ſuperiority of their wiſdom, and the remarkable ſanctity of their manners. To ſay nothing of the Ionic and Italic ſchools, which in their turns have produced perſons of great eminence and abilities, I ſhall entirely confine myſelf to ſpeak of the ſeven ſage contemporaries of Greece.

THALES of Miletus, who is generally counted in the number, was founder of the Ionic ſect: the reſt are BIAS and CLEOBULUS of Caria, CHILON and MYSON of Laconia, SOLON of Athens, and PITTACUS of Mitylene. They were ſo highly reſpected by

* Letter LII.

their

their countrymen, as to be diſtinguiſhed by the honourable title, which I have juſt now mentioned. Nor indeed is it to be wondered at, if ſuch ſingular regard was paid to them, ſince however deficient their doctrines may ſeem in more enlightened times, yet methinks a natural reverence is due to thoſe, who firſt opened the avenues to philoſophy, and were the earlieſt improvers of human reaſon. The particular accident, which is ſaid to have been the occaſion, that this title was beſtowed on them, is thus related by the Grecian annaliſts. Some Mileſian fiſhers having taken a ſilver tripod in one of their nets, were not able to agree among themſelves, to whom the property of it ſhould belong, and therefore referred the matter in diſpute to the oracle at Delphi. The oracle pronounced it ſhould be given to the wiſeſt man. Accordingly it was ſent to THALES, who modeſtly declined accepting it; and ſo it paſſed from one to another of theſe philoſophers, till it was at laſt dedicated by SOLON to the god APOLLO. When it was brought to MYSON, the perſons charged with it were received by him in the habit of a menial ſlave working on his own grounds. Happy times of primitive ſimplicity, when a wiſe man was known by no other token than his virtue!

I proceed to THALES. He was born in the firſt year of the thirty fifth olympiad, and was the moſt celebrated geometrician, naturaliſt, and aſtronomer of the age he lived in. But I ſhall not preſent him to thee, SMERDIS, in any one of theſe regards; and chuſe rather to conſider him in the capacity of a moral teacher. For as thou, in the character of a religious inſtructor,

inſtructor, art more verſed in precepts for the conduct of life, than the idle reſearches of ſcience; ſo thou art better pleaſed with the profeſſors of the former, than the latter. THALES, having received ſeveral queſtions from AMASIS, the king of Ægypt, ſent him the following anſwer to each of them: "Wouldſt thou be "informed, what is oldeſt? 'Tis God, becauſe he is "a being from eternity. Wouldſt thou know, what is "greateſt? 'Tis ſpace, becauſe the world contains all "things, but that contains the world. Wouldſt thou "be ſatisfied, what is faireſt? 'Tis the earth, becauſe "it is exquiſitely contrived and diſpoſed. Wouldſt "thou be told, what is wiſeſt? 'Tis time, becauſe "it diſcovers the moſt ſecret tranſactions. Wouldſt "thou be acquainted, what is common to all men? "'Tis hope, for when every poſſeſſion is gone, that "abides with us. Doſt thou ask, what is beſt? It is "virtue, for it ſweetens the enjoyments of life. Doſt "thou ask, what is worſt? It is vice, for it corrupts "every good. Doſt thou enquire, what is ſtrongeſt? "'Tis neceſſity, becauſe that alone is invincible. Doſt "thou enquire, what is moſt agreeable? 'Tis to obey "the dictates of nature, and purſue the ends ſhe has "marked out." As he had ſpent the beſt part of his paternal fortune in literary purſuits, his friends reprimanded him one day ſeverely for his neglect of it; but he told them, that a wiſe man was always rich, while a rich man had ſeldom the happineſs to be wiſe. And upon their asking him, what advantage he had reaped from his acquirements in knowledge, he anſwered, he would ſoon give them a remarkable inſtance of it. In ſhort

having

having foreſeen by ſome aſtronomical obſervations, that it would be a fruitful year, he bargained with the inhabitants of Miletus for the produce of their olive-trees in the enſuing ſeaſon. From theſe he extracted a large quantity of oil, the profits of which proved a conſiderable revenue to him. When his acquaintance came to congratulate him on this ſucceſs, he generouſly diſtributed his gains to the neceſſitous, adding, that it was the duty of a philoſopher to eſteem money at a low rate. They tell of him, that in a conference, which he held with a philoſopher of Priene, relating to his extraordinary method of calculating the proportion, that the ſun's body bears to the orbit he deſcribes in his annual courſe, the Prienæan admiring the acuteneſs of THALES and the beauty of the invention, intreated him to command any reward, which it lay in his power to beſtow on him; but THALES made him this anſwer, "I require no "other reward from you, than that you ſhould not "arrogate to yourſelf the credit of the invention; "but if ever you impart it to others, inform them "of the true author. The wiſeſt men are by no "means contemners of glory; much leſs ſhould I, "who am very far from the poſſeſſions of wiſdom, be "pleaſed with any man, who would unjuſtly uſurp "to himſelf the honour of thoſe diſcoveries, which "might otherwiſe redound to my own reputation." A queſtion was one day put to him, whether it were poſſible for a man to conceal his actions from the gods: "Impoſſible, ſaid he, becauſe they are even ac-"quainted with our thoughts." He uſed to thank

providence

providence for three things, that he was born a reaſonable being, and not a brute; a man, and not a woman; a Greek, and not a Barbarian. His love of liberty and independence was ſuch, that during his reſidence in the palace of AMASIS, he made himſelf obnoxious to the miniſters by the freedom and boldneſs of his converſation. In particular he expreſſed his abhorrence of tyranny ſo ſtrongly, that it gave offence to the king, who could never be eaſy, till he had ſent him away with ſome notable marks of his diſpleaſure. The reflection, which chiefly enraged them, was this, "that of all wild beaſts a tyrant is the worſt, and of "all tame beaſts a flatterer." Thus was THALES an excellent philoſopher, but a bad courtier! This however happened fortunately for Greece, ſince by that means he was forced back into his native country, which he enriched with thoſe invaluable treaſures of learning, that he brought from Ægypt.

BIAS was deſcended of a noble family in Priene. He had a natural talent for eloquence, which he ſo improved by practice, that his name as an orator grew famous over all Greece. To tell a pleader, that he had performed at the bar of a court of juſtice like BIAS of Priene, was for many years thought the higheſt compliment, that could have decently been paid to any one. The moſt remarkable ſtory, that is told of him, I find to be this. When ARDYS, who ſucceeded GYGES on the throne of Lydia, took the city of Priene by ſtorm, and was juſt preparing to give it up to the plunder of his ſoldiers, the inhabitants were diligently employed in removing their effects. In the midſt

midſt of this general conſternation, BIAS alone appeared not concerned for the event; and being admoniſhed by ſome of his acquaintance to follow their example, he immediately anſwered them, "You are "miſtaken, if you think I am unmindful of my af- "fairs; for all that is mine I carry with me." There is one precept of his, which bears hard upon his character, viz. "That we ſhould ever behave towards "an enemy, as if he might become our friend; and "towards a friend, as if he might become our enemy." The firſt part of it, which regards our conduct to an enemy, is a wiſe and rational reflection; but the laſt part, that regards our conduct to a friend, ſeems deſtructive of ſocial happineſs and the pleaſure reſulting from the unreſerved overflowings of affection. The different circumſtances and caſualties of my life, venerable SMERDIS, (and ſurely various are the trials I have undergone) never gave me occaſion, I confeſs to thee, to believe it a neceſſary maxim. This concluſion however thou wilt naturally draw from it, that the philoſopher, who imparted this ſevere advice to the world, muſt have entruſted the ſecrets of his heart to a man, who proved afterwards perfidious; and the rather, becauſe one would imagine, that nothing could have extorted it from him, but his own fatal experience of the corruption and fickleneſs of human nature. How much better is the generous principle of his countryman CLEOBULUS, that "Enemies are to be re- "claimed by a gentle forbearance, and friends to be "preſerved by a cordial benevolence!" The life of this philoſopher was not diſtinguiſhed by any intereſting

events. It is known of him in general, that he lived happily in the office of principal magiſtrate in his city, and was bleſſed by providence with an extraordinary daughter. She was a celebrated compoſer of ænigmas, many of which ſhe ſent into Ægypt to be ſolved by the ſagacity of the learned. Though her father was very attentive to the management of his paſſions, yet ſhe was of great ſervice to him in moderating thoſe unguarded ſtarts of anger, which were apt to break from him; a circumſtance the more agreeable to CLEOBULUS, as it was accompanied with all the amiable ſimplicity of real tenderneſs and duty!

CHILON poſſeſſed the dignity of an Ephorus in Lacedæmon. Being asked by ÆSOP the fabuliſt, what he thought moſt difficult, he replied, "to keep a ſecret, and "to bear an injury." He wrote a letter to PERIANDER of Corinth, in which he told him, that "it was im- "poſſible for a tyrant to be ſafe; and he might eſteem "himſelf ſingularly fortunate, if he died peaceably in "his bed." In his old age he declared among his intimates, that he was not conſcious he had ever done any thing inconſiſtent with his duty, except that in a conteſt between one, whom he loved, and another, whom he had no regard for, he was unwilling to determine either againſt his friend or the law, and ſo perſuaded him to appeal to a different tribunal, where he might hope to be acquitted. How few are there, who like CHILON, at the cloſe of a long life, can accuſe their judgment but once of being warped by partiality!

MYSON was an inhabitant of the town of Chæna. Notwithſtanding his father was governor of the place,

he ſeems to have neglected thoſe honours, to which his birth and rank did naturally call him, and to have retired from the noiſe of public buſineſs to his little farm, confining himſelf to the culture of his lands, and the improvement of his own mind.

I come now to SOLON. Were I to give thee a particular account of his inſtitutions, this letter would ſwell into a volume; nor will I endeavour to deſcribe to thee the rapturous veneration, which the Athenians pay to his memory, ſince an attempt of that ſort could only preſent thee with a faint idea of it. Beſides, thou mayſt perceive it is no part of my deſign, to conſider him as a wiſe law-giver or a ſuperior politician, but as he ſtands on an equality with the reſt of theſe ſpeculative philoſophers. Having met with innumerable croſſes, which uſually diſturb a good man in republican governments, SOLON was rather forced by the neceſſity of the times, than tempted by his curioſity, to travel into Egypt. However while he ſtaid there, he made himſelf well acquainted with the knowledge of the country. On his return to Athens, he found PISISTRATUS inveſted with the ſupream authority; and though he was his neareſt relation, yet he vigorouſly oppoſed each of his arbitrary meaſures. He told his countrymen, that "in aſſerting their common "liberties, he thought himſelf wiſer than ſome among "them, and braver than others; wiſer than thoſe, "who ſuſpected not the intentions of PISISTRATUS, "and braver, than thoſe, who ſuſpected them, but "timorouſly concealed their ſentiments." He uſed to ſay, that "laws are like cobwebs; they entangle the

" weak and men of low condition, but the rich and " the powerful break through them." The ſtory of his conference with CROESUS on the ſubject of happineſs, is well known from the large account of it, that hath been lately publiſhed in the Clio of HERODOTUS. I imagine a copy of that excellent hiſtory muſt have penetrated into Bactria; and therefore I will not trouble thee with a tedious repetition of what is there recited, nor ſpoil its beauty by contracting it. SOLON, in order to prevent the abuſes, which might ariſe from the extenſive power of the people, created a council of four hundred to be choſen out of the tribes, who were to examine every propoſition, before it was offered to the general aſſembly for their determination. On this head ANACHARSIS the Scythian ſage made a lively remark to him; " Methinks," ſaid he, " it is a ſtrange diſpoſition of your affairs, that " you ſhould ſuffer wiſe men to debate, and leave it " to fools to decide."

PITTACUS was a man of remarkable ſteadineſs in his conduct. He killed the tyrant, who oppreſſed his country, and for that gallant action the people of Mitylene ſubmitted themſelves of their own accord to his authority. He governed them for ten years with ſurprizing lenity; and when they begun to grow weary of him, he abdicated the regal office. He would frequently exclaim, " How difficult is it for a great man " to be honeſt?" Without doubt, he had experienced, that the life of a prince was one miſerable round of diſſimulation; and that it was ſometimes more neceſſary to ſatisfy the exigencies of ſtate-policy, than the dictates

dictates of conſcience. He exhorted his friends to ſecure a retreat within their own boſoms, and to fly from the troubleſome croud of flatterers, which ſurrounded them, to that engaging ſolitude. He ordered a wheel to be placed in the temple at Mitylene, as an emblem of the uncertain courſe of fortune and viciſſitude of things.

I have now laid before thee, venerable SMERDIS, ſuch material particulars, as I have been able to collect, relating to the lives and characters of the wiſe men. Nor can it have eſcaped thy penetration, that in the maxims, which I have cited from them in the courſe of my letter, they have touched upon thoſe leſſons of wiſdom, which are the moſt improving, and conveyed them to the underſtanding of others with the cleareſt brevity. At the ſame time it muſt be owned, that the ſentences I ſpeak of, though they are certainly very precious remains of their opinions, are yet far from compoſing any regular and conſiſtent ſcheme of philoſophy. Hence is it, that the doctrines of the Grecian ſages ſwarm with various contradictions, while ſome have rejected with diſdain, what others ſupported with obſtinacy. How little then can any or all of them be compared with the inſpired prophet of the Eaſt! If theſe had the happineſs to be bleſſed with any faint dawnings of the light of reaſon; ZOROASTER enjoyed it in its full force and luſtre. If theſe laid down any rational principles of conduct in human life, ZOROASTER underſtood the relations of duty, and revealed a noble ſyſtem of morality. If theſe were eminent among their citizens for philoſophical auſteri-

ties; ZOROASTER may be conſidered as a perfect pattern of virtue. If theſe inveſtigated any truths in the knowledge of nature; ZOROASTER was acquainted with all her ſecret wonders and mightieſt operations. If theſe, when they worſhipped that immortal power, who is the provident artiſt, and wiſe governor of the univerſe, confined themſelves to the petty limits of a temple made with hands, and offered ſacrifices on altars of their own erecting; ZOROASTER taught, that the temple of OROMASDES was infinite ſpace, that his altar was the earth, the air, and the heavens. If theſe were of ſervice to one corner of mankind, to their native cities, and the narrow diſtricts of their own communities; the religion of ZOROASTER was not fixed to one place or ſociety of men; it has made its way through innumerable nations of the world. To conclude, the philoſophers, like the gods of Greece, were partial in their knowledge, ſelfiſh in their purſuits, unſettled in their conduct, contentious in their natures, mean in their affections: ZOROASTER, like his own deity, the great OROMASDES, was boundleſs in knowledge, extenſive in benevolence, uniform in his conduct, undiſturbed in his nature, refined in his affections. In a word, the former were only fitted to perplex the reaſons, and divide the hearts of their countrymen; while the latter was born to clear and improve the one, to enlarge and unite the other. Adieu.

C.

From Athens.

LETTER

LETTER LX.

CLEANDER to MEGABYZUS. From Athens.

HAD I not received thy commands to lay before thee ſome account of the military diſcipline of the Greeks, I ſhould never have ventured to addreſs my remarks on that ſubject to ſo conſummate a captain, who by a long experience in the duties of a ſoldier, and the warlike arts of different nations, muſt anticipate every thing, that can be offered, on a ſcience, which the ableſt general now living might be proud to learn under thy enſigns. But my deſire to gain an inſight into every particular in the Athenian policy and cuſtoms, from whence the Perſian miniſtry could expect information, has induced me to extend my enquiries to a part of knowledge, which would otherwiſe have lain out of my ſphere. I ſhall therefore endeavour to comply with thy orders, by ſending thee ſuch obſervations, as I have either had an opportunity of making myſelf, or collected from the diſcourſe of the beſt officers amongſt the Athenians, whoſe tactics throughout this letter I have kept principally in view.

The military force of this republick, and indeed of all the other Grecian ſtates, is compoſed of three ſorts of troops, citizens, allies, and mercenaries. The former, thou mayſt imagine, are held in the higheſt degree of eſteem, and moſt relied upon; the latter being expoſed without concern, and never truſted without

neceſſary cautions; and ſince their attachment to the cauſe, for which they fight, is owing to motives of conſtraint or profit, their fidelity is ſometimes ſuſpected.

The young Athenians are early trained up to arms; at the age of eighteen they learn the military exerciſes under the inſpection of able maſters, and enure their bodies to ſuppleneſs and fatigue, by frequenting the ſtadia and wreſtling ſchools. At twenty their names are entred in the publick regiſter, after taking a ſolemn oath in the temple of AGRAULES, by which they oblige themſelves "to fight till the laſt gaſp for the intereſt of religion and the ſtate, in conjunction with their fellow citizens, or even alone, if occaſion requires; to encreaſe the proſperity of their country; to obey the laws enacted by conſent of the people; and to oppoſe with all their might thoſe, who ſhall attempt to alter the conſtitution." When this ceremony is performed, the young men are looked upon as members of the commonwealth, enjoy all the privileges, and are liable to all the duties of citizens; amongſt which that of appearing in arms, whenever the voice of the people requires their ſervice in the field, is none of the leaſt: but in order to enure them to the diſcipline and fatigues of war, they take their turns by detachments to mount guard in the citadel Piræeus, and other forts of Attica, for two years, before they are ſent upon any expedition abroad. The Grecian infantry, in which the ſtrength of their armies conſiſts, is made up of Hoplitai, Pſiloi, and Peltaſtai. The firſt are heavy-armed ſoldiers, who engage with long ſpears,

ſpears, broad ſhields, and cutting ſwords. The ſecond are light-armed men, who fight with arrows, darts, and ſlings, and are placed either in the van to begin an engagement, or on the flanks of the wings, to gall the enemies cavalry, and prevent their breaking in. The Peltaſtai are a ſort of troops between the two former, ſo called from the narrow targets which they wear. Theſe again are divided into bodies of thouſands, hundreds, and fifties each, commanded by their proper officers, the Chiliarchs, Hekatontarchs, &c. To each company of 120 men 4 ſubalterns are aſſigned; the lieutenant, whoſe poſt is in the rear, the enſign, the trumpeter, the crier, who gives the word of command, and the ſutler, who ſupplies the men with neceſſaries, and waits upon them. The Athenian officers all aſſure me, that amongſt the many advantages their troops have over thoſe of the Eaſt, they reckon theſe ſub-diviſions to be one of the principal. By this means the men perform their exerciſes with more exactneſs and uniformity, move with greater quickneſs, attack with greater force, and have a larger number of officers to watch over their conduct in their quarters, as well as encourage and direct them in a day of battle. Over the foot are placed ten camp-maſters, with the title of Taxiarchoi, choſe by each of the * tribes; they command under the gene-

* Their names are the Egean, the Erecthian, the Cecropian, the Pandionian, the Acamantian, Antiochian, Leontian, Oenian, Hippothoonian, and Ajacian. The reader may ſee in POTTER's Antiquities the ſeveral diviſions of theſe tribes into Demoi or boroughs. Note by the tranſlator.

ral,

ral, who is always one or more of the Strategoi elected annually by the people. The infantry of their reſpective tribes give orders for the marches, review the men, puniſh them for their miſdeameanours, and regulate the diſtribution of victuals to every ſoldier. The cavalry are divided into ſquadrons under their proper officers, two of whom are called Hipparchoi, and have the ſame juriſdiction over them as the Taxiarchoi have over the foot: but the Grecian cavalry is not very numerous; and in this reſpect I ſhould think the Perſian armies were far their ſuperiors, when they have generals at their head, who know how to make uſe of ſo material an advantage. The * Hippeis or horſemen at Athens compoſe the ſecond order of citizens, and are required to have a certain annual revenue, and to maintain a horſe at their own charge; but they do not amount to 1200 at the moſt. The Lacedemonians are likewiſe but indifferently ſupplied with cavalry; the beſt of theirs comes from Sciros, a town not far diſtant from Sparta. Indeed a very natural reaſon is to be aſſigned for their deficiency in this branch of their armies; for as Attica and Peloponneſus are mountainous and rough countries, there is no opportunity or encouragement to train up a breed of horſes for the ſervice; and thoſe they have can be of little uſe in military operations from the ſituation of

* The Athenians were divided into three orders: the firſt were worth 500 medimns of liquid and dry commodities; the ſecond 300; the third 200: the reſt were allowed to vote, but not to bear offices in the ſtate. This was an inſtitution of SOLON. Note by the tranſlator.

the

the ground. The cavalry of the Theſſalians, who poſſeſs large and extended plains, is moſt eſteemed, and therefore hired by the reſt of the Grecians to ſupply that defect amongſt themſelves. The cuſtom of paying ſoldiers was introduced here by PERICLES: before his adminiſtration every citizen ſerved at his own expence; now a foot ſoldier receives 3 oboli a day, and a horſeman a drachm; but upon particular occaſions this ſtipend is encreaſed.

Thou muſt have obſerved of the Grecian armies, that they are not formidable ſo much for their numbers or even courage, as individuals, as for the excellent diſcipline, which prevails among them, and that warm love of glory and their country, which animates every man in the army from the higheſt officer to the meaneſt ſoldier. Their courage without the former would only expoſe them to danger; without the latter they would want the moſt powerful motive to diſtinguiſh themſelves. Their evolutions are contrived with deep penetration, founded on practice and a ſtudy of the military art, which is unknown to the rude undiſciplined multitudes of the Eaſt, who are dragged out of the villages to recruit our armies, and urged on by blows and ſcourges to the attack.

When the Grecians would break the adverſe battalions, they throw themſelves into the form of a wedge, which the enemy, if they underſtand their buſineſs, receive in a koilembolon, or pair of ſheers, which intercepts and breaks the force of the rhombus. When they would receive or give a regular onſet, they form in a body of 16 in flank, and 500 in front,

front, preſenting on all ſides a firm impenetrable phalanx. When they would enter defiles or ſtraits poſſeſſed by an enemy, they extend their files in the ſhape of a worm, from whence the figure receives its name: in ſhort no one incident can happen in a day of battle, for which they have not invented a proper motion; unlike the armies of Perſia, potent Lord, thou well knoweſt, who ruſh on tumultuouſly with hideous cries, and place their whole dependance upon the fury of the firſt attack. If that fails them, their courage abates, their ranks grow diſordered, the officers are unable to give orders in the confuſion that enſues; and if the enemy give one briſk puſh, they betake themſelves to a ſhameful flight.

The ſcience of attacking and defending towns is much improved in this country ſince the invaſion of XERXES, when the Spartans, after the defeat of MARDONIUS, could not force a body of Perſians, who had taken refuge in ſome wooden fortifications, till the Athenians marched to their aſſiſtance. The long duration of the ſiege of Platæa has contributed towards a variety of new works and machines, that are daily brought into practice; whereas before their uſual method was to draw up their army in the form of a tortoiſe, and give a general ſtorm, or elſe batter the walls with the ram, and then ſend a party to enter by the breach. I have hitherto confined my ſelf to the diſcipline of the land armies; but as the chief pride and ſecurity of Athens conſiſts in the number and goodneſs of her ſhips and the experience and ſkill of her ſeamen, thou mayſt expect from me ſome remarks on that part of her military force.

force. In a former letter to * GOBRYAS I mentioned the claſſes of 1200 rich citizens choſen out of each tribe, upon whom the expences of all the naval preparations are laid. Theſe claſſes are divided into companies of ſixteen each, who unite to fit out a trireme; but there ſeems to be ſomething unjuſt in the law, upon which this practice is founded. Every citizen, from the age of twenty five to forty is ranked in one of theſe companies; and whether he has a revenue of 200 talents, or of two, is obliged to contribute equally in equipping a ſingle ſhip. Now it ſeems highly unreaſonable, that the poſſeſſors of plentiful eſtates ſhould contribute no more than others towards the public expence; and that the citizens of ſmaller fortunes ſhould be burdened with as large an aſſeſſment, as the more opulent: and yet the law, as it ſtands at preſent, is liable to both theſe objections, and I think it would be very meritorious in any of their † orators, to propoſe a new regulation. The Athenians man their gallies, according to their reſpective rates, with a due proportion of ſoldiers and ſailors. The former are generally heavy-armed, for they endeavour to come to boarding as ſoon as poſſible, and by engaging hand to hand bring it as near as is practicable to a land fight. The ſailors are made up of mariners, who manage the ſails and tackling, and rowers; both compoſed of citizens, contrary to the practice in other countries, where the latter are always ſlaves. Amongſt the Athenians they divide them into

* Letter XXXIII.

† This was afterwards done by DEMOSTHENES. See the oration περὶ Στεφάνου, wherein both the laws are inſerted.

three

three orders; thoſe in the uppermoſt benches are called Thranitai, thoſe in the middle Zeugitai, thoſe in the lower Thalamitai. The firſt have the largeſt pay, ſince by the diſtance of the water, and length of their oars, they undergo more fatigue and danger than the others. The officers on board a fleet, beſides the admiral and his lieutenants, are the Trierarchs or captains of ſhips, who have under them the maſter or pilot, the Keleuſtes or boatſwain, who directs and places the rowers, and the Logiſtes or purſer, beſides other ſubalterns.

Having thus ſubmitted to thy cenſure an imperfect eſſay on the Grecian tactics, permit me, illuſtrious miniſter, to impart my thoughts with boldneſs on a ſcheme, which has often occurred to me. Since our royal maſter has ſeen peace in his days, he has done a great deal towards healing the loſſes, and reſtoring the honour of the empire. But might he not put the finiſhing ſtroke to ſo glorious a work, by allowing penſions out of his treaſury to any able officers and engineers, who would travel over Greece, and ſtudy the art of war, which begins to arrive at a degree of perfection and refinement unknown to former ages? Some might in diſguiſe take plans of the principal cities, enquire into the ſtrength of each ſtate, ſurvey the ſituation of the country, and find out the proper places for encampments, ſurprize, or diſembarkation. Others ſhould enliſt in the troops, which now conteſt the dominion of Greece, endeavour to gain the eſteem of the generals, and be preſent at and take a journal of every action. When they return home, the king might

might reward them proportionably to the diligence of their enquiries, and the importance of their remarks. They ſhould then be diſperſed over the provinces, to diſcipline the troops, and fortify thoſe cities and paſſes, which are eſteemed the keys of the empire. I know it is ſufficient to mention this project to thee, potent Satrap; nor need I enlarge upon the encreaſe of real ſtrength to Perſia, of reputation to her arms, of glory to our preſent monarch, and of luſtre to the miniſtry of MEGABYZUS, which would be the infallible conſequences of it. Farewel.

LETTER LXI.

SMERDIS to CLEANDER.

THE more I conſider human nature, the more I find it unable to bear the agitations of love, grief, or indignation in ſilence, or under the cover of tranquillity and chearfulneſs. In ſuch circumſtances the affections will force their way; we muſt vent our groans to the rocks, and pour out our complaints to the ſenſeleſs and inanimate part of the creation, if we are afraid to entruſt them with the rational and thoſe of our own ſpecies. Men of narrow minds, who have wanted generoſity enough to gain a friend, or of fickle minds, who have wanted ſedateneſs enough to fix one, muſt frequently have recourſe to ſoliloquies in retirement, when toſſed to and fro by the hurricane of paſſion. But for my own part, I thank the gracious OROMASDES, that he has given me a warmth of temper,

temper, as well as ſtrength of underſtanding, ſufficient to make me zealous in cultivating a ſtrict correſpondence with the wiſe and faithful CLEANDER, in whoſe boſom I may depoſit every undiſguiſed thought and diſquieting apprehenſion. Let me open myſelf to thee without reſerve on the ſtate of the Bactrian ſchools, and the indolence of our order. It will not ſurprize thee, that I blame their faults; for thou art too well acquainted with my integrity, to imagine me capable of approving thoſe corruptions, which the ſanguine would pronounce it my duty to palliate, and the cautious would think it my intereſt to maintain.

Our mighty prophet ZOROASTER received numberleſs favours from the great DARIUS, in whoſe memorable reign he appeared. The erudition and ſanctity of the order, which he reformed, occaſioned the bountiful encouragements and large revenues, which were beſtowed on us by the monarchs who ſucceeded him. They thought our attention to rectify the religious notions, and improve the reaſons of our followers, qualified us to inſtruct the youth of the empire in philoſophical ſpeculations: they thought the recluſeneſs of our condition and the purity of our lives enabled us to curb their appetites, and refine their practice. In our hands therefore the heirs of noble families and the hopes of the kingdom were placed.

By this means they conceived, that, notwithſtanding the alterations in our government and manners, the loſs of the ancient ſchools would be repaired, ſimplicity preſerved in thoſe, who are ſurrounded with ſuperfluities, and continence amidſt every incitement

to tranſgreſs. I need not enlarge on theſe miſtakes, which are obvious, and, however abſurd in themſelves, are too ſerious in their conſequences to be ridiculed.

Alas! the ignorance of the world, which we are generally brought up in, and which has prepoſterouſly raiſed our reputation both as obſervers and teachers of morality, introduces more faults amongſt us than it ſaves us from; and inſtead of ſubduing or extinguiſhing the paſſions, it only cuts out another channel for them. Though our deſire of reputation be checked, and our vanity conſtrained to act in a narrow ſphere, we give a looſe to pride, and look down on the uſeful part of ſociety with an inſolent ſcorn. Though we have few opportunities of ſhewing our obſtinacy in action, yet we are ſtrangely tenacious of opinions; and though we are clear of thoſe vices, which ariſe from promiſcuous converſation, we fall into the low habits, that attend a want of it. —— Believe me, my Epheſian friend, there is no error, which carries leſs the appearance of truth, at the ſame time that there is none more deſtructive of magnanimity, than this, that "not to have met with temptation, is to have "acquired virtue." But if it was the intention of providence, that virtue ſhould be the effect of good ſenſe and experience united, it is then incumbent upon us, who are to educate a nation, to have known the world, and ſtruggled with its inſinuating allurements. What though we be guilty of miſtakes at firſt ſetting out, neither ourſelves nor our neighbours ſhould deſpair of us; we muſt purſue our journey, take care to be informed better of the right track; and after having

followed it, our advice to the young adventurers in life will be received with more reverence, when it proceeds from a ſobriety not natural and phlegmatic, but painfully and dangerouſly acquired. Such men would be far advanced in the way to perfection; for though to learn wiſdom from the ſufferings of others be the higheſt point of it, yet it requires no ſmall ſhare of underſtanding to take warning, and to give it, in conſequence of our own. Such men might be ſaid in truth to have the government of their paſſions, might be eſteemed maſters in the art of education; and having tried what the world is, would be fit inſtructors for thoſe, who are to live in it. It were to be wiſhed therefore, that while ſome of us are employed in contemplating and explaining the divine volume of ZERDUSHT, others ſhould be employed in the public ſervice, in travelling abroad, and enriching themſelves with the fruits of their enquiries into men and things; and that all of us, at a certain age, in recompence for the ſupport we had received from the colleges of Balch, ſhould be recalled, and obliged to ſpend the reſt of our days in forming the youth of Perſia. We might then hope to ſee the inſtitution of this place much amended. Inſtead of teaching chicanry, evaſion, and poſitiveneſs in our ſchools, the ſound principles of policy and juſtice would be ſet forth: inſtead of a ſcrupulous attachment to forms enforced by the terror of an unmanly diſcipline, we ſhould behold a general regard to good breeding, candour, and philoſophy ariſing from an inward regulation of temper and a well-turned mind. No man would enjoy the penſion

deſigned

deſigned for the diligent, who was not ſome how or other intereſted in the great work; and it might be found poſſible, however it may ſeem otherwiſe at preſent, for the oldeſt and moſt venerable of our order to converſe with their diſciples, and not betray themſelves into the extreme of an unmeaning dignity, or a low familiarity. Thus conducted and improved in the opening of life, the youth would no longer laugh at our ſage counſels with the giddineſs of children, nor diſdain to obey our laws with the ſtubbornneſs of men; and the Magi themſelves would think they ill deſerved the emoluments they receive, or ill anſwered the end of their founder, if they were regular in no good thing but their oraiſons to the riſing or declining MITHRAS.

C.

LETTER LXII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. From Athens.

THE fourth campaign of this war is opened with ſymptoms not very favourable to the Athenians. Three expreſſes have arrived here within theſe few days from the magiſtrates of Tenedos and the inhabitants of Methymna, which brought advice, that all the cities of Leſbos had entered into a confederacy to ſhake off their dependance upon Athens; that their magazines were furniſhed with corn, and their garriſons with archers from the Pontus Euxinus; and that the preparations for an open revolt were ſo far advanced, that unleſs the Athenians uſed the utmoſt vigour and

diſpatch in quelling theſe commotions, the iſland would be loſt. Private intelligence is likewiſe come from ſome friends in Mitylene, the capital of Leſbos, that the leading men amongſt the revolters have determined to ſend deputies to Lacedemon, to deſire that they may be admitted into the Peloponneſian league. This news has ſenſibly touched the Athenians; the moſt penetrating amongſt them apprehend very bad conſequences from theſe Leſbian troubles. They look upon this revolt as giving the ſignal to the other tributary iſlands, to withdraw their ſupplies of ſhips and money, and either ſtand abſolutely neuter in the preſent diſſentions of Greece, or throw themſelves under the protection of Lacedemon or the Great King. They very well know, that their allies obey them more through fear than affection; that the abſolute authority, which for many years they have exerciſed over them, has produced diſcontents, which want nothing but a fit occaſion to break out into an open flame. They reaſon further, What can Athens do, when ſhe is left alone to ſtand her ground againſt ſo many potent enemies, who pretend to have no other cauſe for taking up arms, but to keep the balance even, and preſerve themſelves from the inſults and aſſuming ſpirit of the Athenians? Her treaſures muſt ſoon be exhauſted, when the chief ſources of them (ariſing from the contributions of the allies) are either loſt to her, or turned againſt her. The inhabitants of a ſingle city can never ſuffice to man annual fleets, or recruit large armies, particularly when that city has been conſiderably weakened by a cruel plague; much

leſs

leſs will they be able to bear up againſt the loſſes and misfortunes, which are the ordinary attendants of war. What are we to expect from the other iſlands, when one, that has been the moſt favoured and diſtinguiſhed, is the firſt to riſe in arms againſt us? Theſe are the reflections I meet with in the porticos, where the Athenians meet to talk over the buſineſs of the day, and to enquire of each other what news is ſtirring. To add to their diſtractions the Peloponneſian army is encamped in the territories of Attica, and ſkirmiſhes often happen between their detachments and the garriſon of the city. However to preſerve that reſolution and addreſs, which they have hitherto ſhewn, they work day and night at the Piræeus to equip a fleet of forty gallies, the command of which is given to CLIPPIDES, who has already received ſecret inſtructions from the ſenate, the contents of which, as I am informed, are; that "he "muſt ſail with the ſquadron under his command to "the port of Mitylene, and endeavour to ſurprize the "inhabitants at a feaſt, which they celebrate every "year to APOLLO without the walls of the city. If he "finds that ſolemnity paſt, or the Mitylenians pre-"pared for his reception, he is to demand of them to "deliver up their ſhips, and demoliſh the fortifications, "which they have lately raiſed. In caſe of refuſal, he "is ordered to declare war againſt them, and to keep "the port blocked up, till further reinforcement ar-"rives from Athens." The ten gallies, which the Leſbians by virtue of their treaty with Athens are obliged to join to their fleet now lying at Phalera, are ſeized, and the officers and mariners thrown into priſon.

I had written thus far, when accidentally hearing a noiſe in the ſtreet, I had the curioſity to enquire the occaſion of it, and was told, that a captain of a trireme ſtationed in the Piræeus had ſtopped a veſſel pretended to be bound for Epheſus, ſecured the packets found on board, and put the men under arreſt by order of the Polemarchus. Struck with the thought, that I had committed a parcel, addreſſed to my brother HIPPIAS, in which were encloſed diſpatches to thy ſelf and ſome Perſian friends, to the care of the maſter of this veſſel, a thouſand doubts and apprehenſions crouded at once into my mind. Recollecting that I had no time to loſe, I run down to the Piræeus, and found the captain preparing to carry his packets to the Prytanes. As I had luckily ſome acquaintance with him, I took him aſide, and told him, that he probably had a packet of mine in his hands, which contained mercantile buſineſs of great conſequence to my brother, which if expoſed to the eyes of the magiſtrates, with ſome of whom he had dealings in the way of trade, muſt be highly detrimental to his traffic here. I therefore deſired him to reſtore me that packet. He remonſtrated to me, that his orders were expreſs to bring all the papers he found in the veſſel. I aſſured him, that upon demand of the magiſtrates it ſhould be produced. My earneſt intreaties, ſupported by the more weighty eloquence of a talent, which I put into his hand, prevailed with him at laſt to reſtore it to me. I went home, and upon the ſpot made up a parcel containing nothing but letters from me to HIPPIAS on our private concerns, which exactly reſembled the former

former in ſize and figure. I had ſcarce put in execution this neceſſary artifice, when an officer brought me a ſummons from the Prytanes to appear directly before them. I went with an honeſt confidence, and found thoſe magiſtrates in deep conſultation. DYMAS the trierarch vouched, that the packet I delivered in to them was the ſame he had ſeized. The papers were looked into, ſome few general queſtions put to me, and after an hour's attendance I was diſmiſſed. The Epiſtata or preſident declared to me, that they were ſatisfied; that I had not been examined upon any particular ſuſpicion, but that nothing might be omitted in ſo diſtempered a time, which any way tended to ſecure the tranquillity of the ſtate. He gravely exhorted me to be diſcreet in my correſpondencies, and prudent in my behaviour. I am ſince informed by a friend among the Prytanes, that the ſhip was ſtopped, becauſe they had diſcovered, that inſtead of going for Epheſus, the maſter was bribed to change his courſe, and make for Leſbos. They have found advices from one AGNON, an hoſt of the Mitylenians, relating to the preparations going forward here. This AGNON is actually impriſoned, and will ſoon be put to death for his treaſonable practices.

Having thus happily eſcaped ſo unexpected a danger, I ſhall ſet forward in a few days for the Olympic games, which are to be celebrated this year with the uſual magnificence. The permiſſion, which thy laſt diſpatch brought me from our royal maſter, to ſurvey ſome parts of Greece, has invited me to undertake ſo agreeable a journey; and the large remittance, which I received lately from TERIBAZUS, enables me to perform it with convenience.

I proſtrate my head in the duſt, potent Satrap, for the favours heaped upon me. May the great OROMASDES continue to ſhed his healing influence upon the throne of CYRUS and the whole empire of Perſia, averting from both (as he hath lately done by diſcovering the perfidy of SACAS) the malign efforts of the accurſed ARIMANIUS. Farewel.

P.

LETTER LXIII.

SMERDIS to CLEANDER.

I Complained * of a relaxation of diſcipline amongſt the Magi; and though not without reaſon, yet it would be injurious to impute it wholly to them: perhaps a general corruption may be too ſtrong for their beſt efforts to reſtrain. The children of the great are committed to their care much later than formerly; they bring with them an high opinion of their rank, a confidence in their paternal fortunes, and eagerneſs for pleaſures, which they have had an early taſte of. They aſſociate only one with another, and ſeek partners in voluptuouſneſs rather than the advantages of wiſe converſation, which would be attended with reſtraint; for excellent inſtruction is ſtill to be had amongſt the Magi by thoſe, who want not induſtry and an ingenuous diſpoſition: witneſs the young ORSAMES, who owns himſelf indebted to our ſchools for thoſe qualities, which adorn him, and promiſe ſuch fruits to his country. But obſerve, CLEANDER, the prudent ſteps taken by the Satraps and the wealthy, who have entertained unfavourable opinions of a Perſian education;

* Letter LXI.

they

they ſend their children abroad, and take no further concern about their conduct than that it may not be ſeen by them. The young Perſian is ſet out with a ſplendid retinue; has his recommendations from SUSA, and wherever he goes, is received as a Satrap; he is honoured in our provinces, and gazed at in foreign ſtates; his mind is elevated above his rank, be it what it will, and his improvements ſeldom qualify him for any. He probably impairs his fortunes, and upon his return has a mind much raiſed above the thoughts of œconomy; or if he ſubmits to it, it is in a wrong place. The expences of equipage and voluptuouſneſs are become neceſſary and indiſpenſable: he therefore grows parſimonious to thoſe, who have juſt claims upon him; he oppreſſes his dependents, and ſparingly rewards the countryman, the guardian of his wealth. Nor is this to be wondered at; the young traveller ſets out with a mind not yet confirmed in any principles, and at an age ſtrongly biaſſed to pleaſure. He therefore moſt naturally falls in with the corruptions of every country both in principles and practice; for as he is diſpoſed to gratify his affections, he readily admits ſuch ſentiments as favour them. It is generally thought the buſineſs of a traveller, to ſelect for the benefit of his country what appears to him to make up the moſt perfect polity; and from his experience of men, to become himſelf an exemplary, wiſe, and good citizen. But our young traveller takes a pleaſure in reciting the imperfections he has obſerved in government, manners, and religion; he dwells much on the ſuperſtitions of Egypt, the bigotry of the people, and the craft

of

of the prieſts; and intimates, that he has much improved his ſagacity in regard to the worſhip of his own country. He is juſt ſuch an obſerver in morals; for if he has made the tour of Greece, he aſſures you, that the rule of right and wrong, the ground of all juſtice ſo much inſiſted on by our anceſtors, is not ſo indelibly imprinted by nature as has been imagined; that an ancient and flouriſhing ſtate has ſubſiſted without the cultivation of it; though probably he takes this upon hearſay, for our youth ſeldom come nearer to Sparta than a neighbouring * iſle much better ſuited to the delicacy of their lives. What can be the reaſon of this, but that they think their practice juſtified by theſe great authorities? Why elſe do we hear little more of Athens, than its ſports and gayety? of Sardis, than its gaming? and of Babylon, than its obſcene hoſpitality? I aſſure thee, CLEANDER, I have known ſome of our youth, after a toilſome paſſage croſs Arabia and the ſea into upper Egypt, upon hearing the feſtival rites at Cyprus were coming on, take a light veſſel, and with all the expedition of oars and ſail ſwim down the Nile, and content themſelves with ſo tranſitory a view of the great cities and monuments of that ancient kingdom. When they reached the ports of Cyprus, which extends its arms into the ſea, and incloſes vaſt fleets in its boſom, they ſpent little reflection on its ſtupendous moles and its conveniences for lading. They heard, that the temple of the Grecian goddeſs was open; that a choir of an hundred youths and as

* Cythera, the iſland of VENUS.

many

many beautiful virgins had already begun the ſolemn ode; they perfumed themſelves with rich oils, and crowned with garlands haſtened to mix in the idolatrous rites, habited like ſhepherds of Arcadia; for all appear in diſguiſe on this occaſion, that they may not be under the reſtraint of ſhame, which ill becomes the votaries of ſo impure a deity.

Tender minds, CLEANDER, are ready for all impreſſions; therefore it is not proper they ſhould be withdrawn from wiſe and virtuous patterns, till they have gained an intimate acquaintance with virtue, and are able to combat the temptations of vice and folly. The ſoul is long in its infancy; the body comes much earlier to maturity: young men therefore (as the wives of the Magi are confined to the moſt beauteous objects of ſight, and hear nothing but harmony, that no ill impreſſion may deface their offspring, which is to be dedicated to the holy ſervice of the temple) ſhould be accuſtomed to no ideas, that may pollute the ſoul, the purity of which is an offering moſt delightful to OROMASDES.

It is at too great a hazard they go in queſt of what is worthy their imitation in Egypt or Greece; for that much may be found ſo by a prudent enquirer, I will not deny: wiſdom is not confined to one climate, it ſhoots out in ſome ſhape every where; at Athens it is wiſe policy, tender regard for the community, and every art, that is properly humane; at Lacedemon it is public liberty, maintained by auſtere diſcipline, and an ignorance of every enervating pleaſure; in Egypt it is piety to the gods, and a veneration for all things ſacred.

ſacred. It once appeared under all theſe denominations in Perſia: alas! that we can now find it only in our hiſtories!

Perhaps after all, CLEANDER, thou wilt ſay, what need all this precaution in favour of virtue? and why ſhould our youth be prejudiced in her behalf, who is repreſented ſo amiable as to ſtrike her beholders with admiration, and force our eſteem? It is becauſe virtue, though more amiable, is not ſo obvious; ſhe uſeth little art to recommend herſelf; like a chaſt virgin ſhe muſt be ſought after and ſued for: vice like a proſtitute always preſents herſelf, is officious, importunate, and enſnaring. ORSAMES is acquainted with this; he traverſes the diſtant regions of the earth, not to gratify the idle curioſity of ſight, or adorn the palace of his Perſian anceſtors with the arts of Greece, but to complete the furniture of his mind, to fit it for the abode of OROMASDES, who deigns to dwell with the good; in awe of whoſe preſence the wicked AHRIMAN will flie from us, as the ſhades of night diſperſe, at the approach of MITHRAS, to diſtant countries, and the deep caverns of the earth.

H.

LETTER LXIV.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES. From Athens.

THIS is the laſt letter, which I ſhall write to thee from Athens in ſome months. I ſet out to morrow on an expedition to the Olympic games, and promiſe myſelf, that the magnificence and order, with which

which they are celebrated, the great confluence of Greeks, who repair from all parts to Olympia, the variety of countries and noble cities I ſhall paſs through in my road, and eſpecially the agreeable ſet of friends, who accompany me, will more than anſwer the ideas of pleaſure and improvement, which I propoſe to myſelf from the journey. Thou wilt, I believe, think, that I have made a very happy mixture of acquaintance, when I let thee into the characters of my fellow-travellers. My patron PHILEMON, as well upon account of his age as his merits, ſhould be mentioned firſt. This worthy Athenian ever ſince my reſiding here has treated me with particular regard: to him I am indebted for the friendſhip I have made with thoſe, who are moſt diſtinguiſhed in Athens for their virtues and abilities: to him I owe the little knowledge I have acquired of the conſtitution of the republic, and the manners of a people the moſt contradictory and various in their diſpoſitions of all others. PHILEMON has paſſed through the moſt conſiderable offices in the ſtate. He was, when very young, captain of a trireme at the battle of Salamis, and narrowly miſſed taking the famous queen ARTEMISIA, who eſcaped him by a very extraordinary ſtratagem. He has been ſince overſeer of the fortifications, archon, one of the 500, and is now a member of the Areopagus. In all theſe employments an unblemiſhed integrity and an exact diſcharge of his duty have recommended him to his countrymen as one of their moſt deſerving citizens. He has frequently oppoſed the meaſures both of CIMON and PERICLES; but it was in ſuch a manner, that you ſaw though he

condemned

condemned the faults, he ſpared the men; and that his oppoſition proceeded not from ambition or caprice, but an honeſt zeal for the public welfare. He is always well heard in the aſſemblies of the people, not from the art or eloquence of his orations, or a command of words, that rather over-powers than convinces the reaſon; but becauſe he ſpeaks to the purpoſe, and with an air and geſture, that ſhews he does not mean to impoſe upon his hearers, unleſs he is firſt deceived himſelf. Another quality, which diſtinguiſhes my friend, is a ſingular humanity. His door is open to every poor citizen, and his table prepared with a frugal hoſpitality to receive any ſtranger, who comes recommended either by his own deſerts, or the requeſt of a common friend. There is not a greater teſt of his benevolent temper, than that though he is an old man, he can encourage the mirth, and bear with the levities of the young; nor a ſtronger inſtance of his good breeding, than that he does not abound in the narrative faculty of years, but is rather forward to promote the converſation of others, than to aſſume an air of ſuperiority by obliging them to liſten to his. This is an imperfect ſketch of PHILEMON's character: I paſs next to that of my other companions.

CLINIAS is deſcended from one of the nobleſt families in Athens; and though both his rank and abilities intitle him to a conſiderable ſhare in the government of his country, he devotes himſelf almoſt wholly to the improvement of ſcience. He is an univerſal patron of arts; the philoſopher, the poet, the painter, the hiſtorian, and the ſculptor find alike the effects of his liberality,

liberality. He is not contented to be an admirer of learning, he is likewiſe an excellent judge of it. I have ſeen him hold an argument with the ſophiſt GORGIAS, and heard him diſpute the doctrine of the ſoul's pre-exiſtence with SOCRATES. ZEUXIS ſubmits his moſt finiſhed picture to his cenſure, and PHIDIAS would alter the drapery or attitude of a ſtatue upon his advice. His table is frequented by all the learned in Athens; he abounds himſelf in the moſt elegant diſcourſe, and has a peculiar art of ſetting the talents of others in the beſt light, and throwing ſomething in their way, that may give them an opportunity to diſtinguiſh themſelves. The two affairs, in which he moſt intereſted himſelf, were the accuſation brought againſt PHIDIAS for defrauding the public in the gold employed about the ſtatue of MINERVA, and the charge againſt ANAXAGORAS for impiety: but neither his intereſt nor his eloquence, though ſupported by PERICLES, could ſave the artiſt from priſon, or the philoſopher from baniſhment.

PHILOCLES is a young man, who gives early marks of being a good officer. He has been employed in the ſervice in Thrace, and behaved with ſo much gallantry at the ſiege of Potidæa, that the generals ſent him to Athens with the news of its being taken. He ſerved laſt ſummer in PHORMIO's fleet, and was recommended by him to the people to be made a trierarch in the ſquadron, which is ready to ſail to Lesbos; but CLEON had intereſt enough to diſappoint him for the ſake of one BATTYLUS, a buffoon and a Lutaniſt. PHILOCLES however is not diſcouraged from purſuing

a military life, but hopes for better ſucceſs at the next equipment. In the mean time he deſigns to put in for the prize of the chariot-courſe at the Olympic games.

To compleat our party, we have CHLORUS of the tribe of Pandion, a young man of wit and politeneſs, but of a character ſomething ſingular: though he has a fund of good ſenſe, he has one weakneſs of affecting a general acquaintance amongſt the rich and the powerful. You generally ſee him at ſome great man's elbow at the theatre, and he is very buſy in laying the cuſhion for him. He boaſts to this day of a letter he received from PERICLES, to thank him for a preſent of olives, and was extremely ſurprized at not hearing from his good friend PHORMIO all the laſt campaign. He is well ſkilled in the genealogy of the Athenian families, and has promiſed we ſhall be ſupply'd with the beſt intelligence from Athens during our abſence.

I pleaſe my ſelf with reflecting on the different views, which my companions and myſelf propoſe from this journey. The humane PHILEMON is willing to be preſent at a ceremony, which he thinks tends to inculcate a reſpect for the Gods, and to remind the different people, which inhabit Greece, of the ties, which ought to unite thoſe, who enjoy one common name, country, and religion. CLINIAS is pleaſed with the thoughts of extending his acquaintance amongſt the learned and ingenious. PHILOCLES flatters himſelf with ſucceſs in a conteſt, that gives a luſtre to the victor's name for his whole life. CHLORUS would be known to every one, who diſplays a ſplendid equi-

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page at Olympia. For my own part, all that I aim at is, to approve myſelf a faithful ſervant to ARTAXERXES, and no uſeleſs miniſter to Perſia. Adieu.

P.

LETTER LXV.

ORSAMES to CLEANDER. From Heliopolis.

AS the prieſts of Ægypt are the moſt conſiderable part of the body politic, and hold the chief rank and preheminence among the people, thou wilt be curious to know, what are the different orders, into which they are diſtinguiſhed. And as theſe ſeveral orders are more ſtrictly kept up according to the ancient eſtabliſhment in the college of Heliopolis than in other places, I will endeavour to ſatisfy thy curioſity. * To diſtinguiſh them according to the different ranks they appear in upon public proceſſions and ſolemnities, I may mention firſt, after the inferior degrees, the chief of the muſic-band, who always carries ſome muſical inſtrument, as an enſign of his office; and in his cuſtody are two of the books of HERMES, one containing hymns in honour of the gods, the other rules and precepts for the conduct of their kings. Next after this officer is the diviner, who carries an horoſcope and a palm-branch, the ſymbols of aſtrology; and he is required to be thoroughly learned in four of the books of HERMES, that treat of that ſcience; one of the order and arrangement of the fixt ſtars; a ſecond of the phaſes of the moon and her conjunctions with the ſun; the other two of the phænomena of their riſing.

* CLEMENS ALEXANDR. Stromat. Lib. VI.

After him comes next in order the ſacred ſcribe. He wears wings faſtened to his mitra, and carries a book with a rule, in which is ink, and a reed to write with. His province lies in the hieroglyphical knowledge, and he muſt be ſkilled in thoſe books, that treat of the doctrine of the globe, geography, the courſes of the ſun and moon and of the five planets; he muſt know accurately the poſition of the ſeveral parts of Ægypt, the nature of the Nile, the lands and diſtricts appropriated to the prieſts, the exact meaſure and dimenſions of them, with the uſes and ſymbolical applications of all the ſacred inſtruments. I may reckon next after him the maſter of the ſacred wardrobe, who carries the rod of juſtice before the prophet, and a cup for libations. He is thoroughly verſed in all the inſtitutes of the Ægyptian diſcipline, and all the rites of ſacrifice; and there are ten kinds of ſervice performed in honour to the gods, under which the whole of the Ægyptian religion may be comprehended: the chief are ſacrifices, offerings of firſt-fruits, hymns, prayers, proceſſions, and public feſtivals. Laſt goes the prophet, followed by thoſe, who carry the bread of *diſtribution*, and he is the head and ſupreme over all. To him it belongs to interpret the laws of HERMES; and he not only preſides in all matters of religion, but according to the ancient conſtitution holds a ſupreme judicature in all cauſes without any further appeal, as * chief of that high tribunal of † thirty, which was compoſed of

* ÆLIAN Var. hiſtor. L. XIV. c. 34.

† DIOD. SICUL. L. I.

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ten from each of the three principal cities, Thebes, Memphis, and Heliopolis. And though his power be limited, ſince Ægypt became ſubject to Perſia, yet his deciſions are ſtill held infallible among the Ægyptians; * as a token of which he wears a ſaphire, with the image or emblem of truth hung by a golden chain about his neck. † The prieſts in general are habited in linnen from a conceit, that woollen garments would defile them. But the ‖ prophet likewiſe hath his head ſhaven, and wears on his feet ſlippers of the bark of the palm-tree, and carries at his breaſt a water-jar, wrapt in the folds of his garment. The prophet is charged with the diſtribution of their revenues. To him belong the ten ſacerdotal books. In thoſe books are contained the laws, the doctrines of their mythology, and whatever relates to the diſcipline of the prieſts. Theſe are the chief diſtinctions among the prieſts of Ægypt or profeſſors of the Hermaic doctrines. And there are upon the whole two and forty books of HERMES abſolutely neceſſary to the literati of Ægypt; thirty ſix of which number, containing all the philoſophy, belong to the forementioned orders; the remaining ſix, which are phyſical, to the Paſtophori, and they treat of the parts and ſtructure of an human body, of diſeaſes, of inſtruments, of medicaments, about the eyes, and laſtly of women. To the forementioned orders may the whole prieſthood of Egypt be referred in

* ÆLIAN. ibid. DIOD. SIC. ibid.

† HEROD. L. II. c. 37.

‖ APUL. METAM. L. II.

their different ranks and degrees. But the Paſtophori and Neocori or ſacred Ædiles are of a much inferior rank, and to be reckoned among the ſubminiſtrant orders, * and the purifications required of them are much leſs tedious and painful. This then is that body of men ſo famous throughout all the world, upon whom the original conſtitution of their country did entirely depend. Nor have they only governed that ſtate in civil and religious matters, preſcribing rules to princes, and exerciſing an abſolute juriſdiction over the actions, and, I had almoſt ſaid, opinions of their own people; but have ſpread their influence abroad, and been in league with the law-givers of every later ſtate. The grand policy of their religious initiations may be thought to have greatly promoted their deſigns, by means of which they could preſerve a correſpondence in diſtant countries, and be informed of whatever was for their purpoſe to know of the ſecrets, not only of ſtates, but of private perſons; thereby the more effectually to deceive and ſurprize thoſe, who reſorted to them. And though they are leſs conſiderable now than they were formerly, yet they will ſtill keep up the ſame diſguiſe and artifice of a myſterious ſecrecy. There is no ſet of men ſeem more to affect a recluſe and contemplative life, or to live more abſtracted from

* CHÆREMON apud PORPHYR. de abſtinent. L. IV. §. 8. Τὸ μὲν κατ' ἀληθείαν φιλοσοφῶν ἔν τε τοῖς προφήταις ἦν καὶ Ἱερογλύφαις, &c. Τὸ δὲ λοιπὸν τῶν Ἱερέων τε καὶ Παστοφόρων καὶ Νεωκόρων πλῆθος καὶ ὑπηρετῶν τοῖς θεοῖς καθαρεύει μὲν ὁμοίως, ὅτι γε μὴν μετ' ἀκριβείας καὶ ἐγκρατείας τοσῆς δὲ.

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all ſecular cares and concernments. They affect a ſingular preciſeneſs in all their actions, a ſlowneſs in their ſteps and motions, * much gravity in their mein and habits, with a ſettled countenance, that ſeldom or ever is changed by ſmiles. The night they dedicate to the obſervation of the heavenly bodies, or to certain ceremonies of purification, which they perform at ſtated hours; the day to the worſhip of their gods, whom they celebrate both at the ſun-riſing, and at noon, and in the afternoon, and at the cloſe of the evening. The moſt general ſtudy, that employs them at other times, is arithmetic and geometry, in which ſciences they are always labouring to make further diſcoveries, and inveſtigate new truths. And to them it muſt be confeſt the greateſt improvements in thoſe ſciences have been owing. Neither is there any art, of which they don't arrogate to themſelves the firſt invention. For the moſt celebrated philoſophers, poets, and law-givers of other nations are mentioned in the ſacred regiſters of this college, as having reſided ſome time among them, and ſubmitted to the diſcipline of their order. Of the moſt eminent they have taken care to preſerve a ſtatue or picture, performed in the taſte of the age, wherein each illuſtrious perſon flouriſhed. They have ſeveral uncouth figures with the names of ORPHEUS, MUSEUS and MELAMPUS engraven on the ſtone, and a DÆDALUS in the manner of his ſtatues, ſaid to be his own work. Among the reſt is the Spartan LYCURGUS, and the Athenian SOLON, PYTHAGO-

* CHÆREMON apud PORPHYR. L. IV. §. 6.

RAS of Samos, and the immortal HOMER, who in his deſcription of the infernal regions, which fable ORPHEUS introduced into the religious doctrines and myſteries of Greece, plainly alludes to this place and the adjoining territories.

I ſhould obſerve, that the prieſts truſt not their own memory to written regiſters any more than that of other famous men. * At Thebes I was ſhewn a ſingle pedigree, which entirely filled a large temple, deduced from father to ſon through more than 300 generations, and every ſucceſſion in it repreſented by a coloſs of wood dreſſed in the habit of the time, when each Piromi, as they called them, or worthy, lived. To this pedigree not a few of the preſent race lay claim, and I think it is carried up to the ſons of the Dioſcuri. For as they boaſt that their mythology with all their learning was received from the firſt Thoth, or MERCURY, they likewiſe celebrate with a particular reverence the memory of an ancient order, called the Cabiri, who were his counſellors and ſecretaries, and aſſiſted in eſtabliſhing that mythology, and the myſteries of a falſe religion, which from Egypt and Phœnicia were propagated into Greece by them or their immediate deſcendants. They were eight brethren, ſons of SYDYC a contemporary of CHRONUS, of whom IOSORTHRUS or ÆSCULAPIUS was one, and they were the ſame with the Corybantes and the Dioſcuri of the Greeks; and their worſhip with certain myſteries was very early eſtabliſhed in Samothrace, Imbrus, and other

* HEROD. Euterp. 143.

iſles

iſles of the Ægean ſea. * The Cabiri had a temple at Memphis, which was inacceſſible to any except the prieſts. But CAMBYSES, when he ravaged the other temples of Egypt, entered into this, and ſcoffing at their images, which were deformed like that of VULCAN, ſet fire to it. MERCURY was the firſt author of a celeſtial ſyſtem of the world, and by him and the Cabiri the hero gods began firſt to be conſecrated into ſidereal divinities, and the prieſts ſcruple not to declare, † that they had the bodies of thoſe gods embalmed and depoſited among them, and that they worſhiped the relics of their bodies here on earth, while their ſouls ſhone as ſtars in heaven. Thus OSIRIS firſt was worſhiped as the ſun, though his relics were conſecrated in the myſteries of ISIS, and his tomb ſhewn at Nyſa in Arabia. And though he be acknowledged as a divinity in his own name, yet the prieſts intimate, that he ſtill receives divine honours in the worſhip of that luminary, to which the famous temple of HELIOPOLIS is dedicated. ‖ And indeed the name OSIRIS ſignifies in their language a thing with many eyes, with alluſion to the ſun, that darts its rays into every corner, and as it were ſurveys the whole earth. In the temple there is a throne of opal, which dazzles with an inexpreſſible brightneſs, when the rays ſtrike upon it. ‡ But there is no ſtatue for the ſun; and

* HEROD. L. III. c. 37.
† PLUTARCH. de ISID. & OSIRIDE.
‖ DIOD. SIC. L. I. c. 1.
‡ LUCIAN de Deâ Syriâ.

the prieſts ſay, they make no image for the ſun and moon in their temples, becauſe every man ſees them daily in the heavens. * Yet in the proceſſion, that is made for conſulting the oracle of that god, a jointed ſtatue of him is carried, which gives its anſwers by motions. In this ceremony the prieſts are attended by the principal perſons of the country. They ſhave their heads, and obſerve a long continence before it begins. † The pillars throughout the temple are of the Pyrite ſtone, the roof of gold and ivory, but diverſied with inimitable art. ‖ The doors are of ſilver; round the ſides are figured the twelve ſigns of the year under the emblems of Ægyptian deities. Within the precincts of this famous temple is a ſtupendous obeliſk dedicated to the ſun by RAMESSES, one of their ancient kings, or rather intended for a monument to perpetuate his own honour. The height of it is ninety nine foot, and each of the ſides four cubits. Every ſide is divided into three rows with hieroglyphical figures and inſcriptions. RAMESSES is intitled upon it, *Lord of the world*, *guardian of Egypt*, and *conqueror of foreign nations*, with many other glorious characters, that ſet him forth as a perſon highly favoured by the gods, and nearly related to them, as it was cuſtomary from the earlieſt times to flatter their kings with a divine original. CAMBYSES, when he attacked this city, and had ſet fire to the buildings, before it reached the obeliſk, out of a particular vene-

* MACROB. SATURN. L. I. c. 23.
† KIRCHER Obeliſc. Pamphil. L. I. c. 5.
‖ OVID. Metam. deſcript. regiæ ſolis.

ration

ration for that magnificent pile, ordered the flames to be extinguiſhed. Adieu.

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LETTER LXVI.

CLEANDER to HYDRASPES. From Megara.

AS I imagine thy curioſity will be excited to know the particulars of our Olympic expedition, I ſhall write a regular account of what occurs moſt remarkable during the courſe of it; and I deſire thou wilt communicate a copy of this letter to the chief ſcribe.

In the morning before we began our journey, PHILEMON, who ſtrictly adheres not only to the eſſentials of religion, but to every point of decency, which an exact obſervance of the ceremonial part requires, invited us to partake in a ſacrifice to MERCURY and HECATE, the gods protectors of travellers, at his houſe. When that was finiſhed, we ſet out, and leaving the city at the weſtern gate, ſoon ſtruck into the road, which leads to Eluſis. The country about Athens wears at preſent a very diſagreeable aſpect from the frequent incurſions of the Peloponneſian army. The Demoi or villages, the habitations of the tribes before they were united by THESEUS, are moſt of them in ruins; the lands lie uncultivated, and the labourers are diſperſed. PHILEMON, as we paſſed along, frequently deplored in tears the calamities of war, and ſometimes pointed out to us with a pious regard a grove or fountain ſacred to ſome local deity, or the ſepulchre of an old hero, that invites travellers to ſtop, and pay a ſhort veneration. The traditions of the country relating

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to theſe ancient monuments, though they are intereſting to a Grecian, whom they remind of ſome religious inſtitution, or remarkable fact in his own hiſtory, would afford but little entertainment to the ear of a ſtranger; and therefore I ſhall only mention ſuch as are particularly remarkable. On one ſide of the way is a tomb erected to the herald ANTHEMOCRITUS, killed (as the Athenians affirm) by the Megareans, to whom he was ſent on an embaſſy juſt before the breaking out of this war. A little further you meet with an altar to ZEPHYRUS, and a ruſtic temple to CERES, in memory of her wandrings in ſearch of PROSERPINE. On the other ſide of the river Cephiſſus you may obſerve an altar to JUPITER *the placable*, where THESEUS is ſaid to have expiated himſelf after the murder of the robber SINIS his relation. Eleuſis is a ſmall town, celebrated for the myſteries performed there to the honor of CERES and PROSERPINE. As it is lawful for none but the initiated to enter into the temple and myſtic cell, which they tell you is capable of holding as many people as a theatre, I can give no account of the inſide. The front is ſumptuous, and adorned with a large portico of Doric pillars. The country people ſhewed us here the threſhing-floor of TRIPTOLEMUS the ſon of CERES, and a field where the firſt crop ever ſown in Greece ſprung up. In memory of ſo ſignal an event, ſome barley out of this very field is made into cakes, and uſed in the myſterious ſacrifices. The town itſelf receives its name from ELEUSIS, the ſon of MERCURY and a ſea nymph, and came into the Athenian poſſeſſion

poſſeſſion in the reign of ERECTHEUS, upon condition, that the family of EUMOLPUS, then prieſt of CERES, ſhould enjoy the privilege for ever of preſiding at the myſteries. After leaving ELEUSIS we ſoon entered the territories of Megara, which formerly belonged to the Athenians, but in the time of CODRUS the Peloponneſians expelled them, and peopled Megara with a Corinthian colony. As one of the pretended cauſes of the war is the ſevere decree made at the motion of PERICLES againſt the Megareans, which the Lacedemonians demanded to have repealed, the people of this place are extreamly incenſed againſt the Athenians, who in return have added a clauſe to their general's oath, that they ſhall annually invade Megara. Notwithſtanding this enmity between the two republics is carried to ſo vaſt a height, we find a very hoſpitable reception at the houſe of a friend of CLINIAS, and have ſpent two days in ſurveying the temples, and other public ſtructures of the place. The city ſtands on a hill, the ſtreets are ſpacious, and adorned with ſome buildings of note. Not far from the gate, where we entered, is a temple dedicated to DIANA SOSPITA, or the Saviour, on a pretty extraordinary occaſion. Whilſt MARDONIUS lay encamped at Thebes, a party of his troops, that had waſted the country round Megara, being upon their retreat, loſt their way in the dark; and either confounded by their fears, or, as the inhabitants report, miſled by a deluſion from the goddeſs, imagined, that they ſaw a band of enemies drawn up againſt them. Under this miſtake they diſcharged their javelins at the neighbouring rocks, which returned

a ſound

a ſound like the groans of dying men. They continued this fanciful fight till day-break. When they had waſted their weapons, a real one enſued; for in this unarmed condition they were attacked, and eaſily routed by the Megareans. Hard by is a grove and temple ſacred to JUPITER. The ſtatue of that god, begun by THEOCOSIMUS of Megara, aſſiſted by PHIDIAS, is left unfiniſhed, becauſe the public revenues and the eſtates of private perſons are ſo exhauſted by the continuance of the war, that they are not able to ſupport the expence of it. The citadel, which takes in a large ſpace of ground, contains ſeveral public buildings; as the monument of ALCMENA the mother of HERCULES, that of HIPPOLITA the Amazon, and of TEREUS the huſband of PROGNE. Here ſtand likewiſe the Prytaneum and a temple of APOLLO. In the forum is the tomb of CHOROEBUS an ancient hero, who killed a dreadful monſter called the Pœna, that was ſent by APOLLO to ravage Argolis. The ſtory is told in verſe upon the monument, and the bas-relief repreſenting the fight between CHOROEBUS and the Pœna is eſteemed the moſt ancient piece of ſculpture in Greece. I have been down at Niſæa, their port and arſenal; it ſtands lower than the town, and is well furniſhed with naval ſtores. A trireme is juſt come in with advice, that the Athenian fleet is ſailed with a fair wind for Leſbos. We ſhall ſtay here a day more, and then proceed for Corinth, which is our next ſtage: from thence I ſhall write to the chief ſcribe, as the cuſtoms and antiquities of that city will afford ample materials for the obſervation of inquiſitive travellers. I can-

I cannot give thee a better idea of the humanity and politeneſs, for which the Grecians are ſo famous, than by concluding with an account of the manner, in which ſtrangers of any diſtinction are received in the towns, through which they paſs. The perſon, who entertains, meets his company at the door of his houſe, and conducts them into the hall, which is conſidered as a ſacrifice and libation to JUPITER XENIOS, or the Hoſpitable. Then they refreſh themſelves after the fatigues of the journey by bathing, which is followed by ſupper, accompanied with muſic, or the enlivening poetry of ſome wandring *Aoidos* or bard. It is cuſtomary at parting for the hoſt and his gueſts to interchange ſome little preſents, to divide a piece of money or ivory, as a pledge of eternal friendſhip. So inviolable are the rights of hoſpitality preſerved, that war itſelf does not deſtroy them. The Greeks, potent ſatrap, cannot be ſufficiently commended for paying this ſtrict regard to thoſe common ties, that diſtinguiſh mankind from the brutes, which are agreeable to the practice of the remoteſt ages, as well as the condition of our nature. Adieu.

P.

LETTER

LETTER LXVII.

CLEANDER to HYDRASPES. From Corinth.

WE have ſome days been arrived at Corinth, which is eſteemed one of the richeſt, largeſt, and moſt beautiful cities in Greece. It's ſituation, thou muſt have heard, is very extraordinary. It ſtands upon a neck of land about five miles over, which joins Peloponneſus to the reſt of Greece. This iſthmus lies between the two bays, the Criſſæan and the Saronic, the one formed by the Ionian, the other by the ÆGEAN ſea. Upon each of theſe bays the Corinthians have an harbour, one called Lechæum, and the other Cenchreæ. The latter is the moſt conſiderable. Here ſtands likewiſe a temple to NEPTUNE, where the ſtatues of the victors at the Iſthmian games are erected, a theatre, and a ſtadium. The approach to the town through a grove of cypreſs trees is very pleaſant. The buildings are moſt of them elegant and ſpacious, and, as well as the ſtatues and pictures, finiſhed by the beſt maſters; for this place amongſt other advantages is celebrated for producing eminent artiſts in architecture, painting, and ſculpture. By the favour of CHYLON, one of the magiſtrates, at whoſe houſe we are lodged, I have ſurveyed all the curioſities of Corinth, and ſhall give thee an account of the moſt remarkable. Several of their public edifices ſtand round the forum. In the middle is a ſtatue of MINERVA, with the muſes carved on the baſe of the pedeſtal. Next to this is

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an aqueduct adorned with a brazen NEPTUNE, at whoſe feet lies a dolphin, that ſpouts out water. On each ſide ariſe the ſuperb temples of VENUS, FORTUNE, and one dedicated to all the gods. The fountain of Priene lies at the foot of the craggy mountain Acrocorinthus: it is ſo named from the nymph PRIENE, who lamented the death of her daughter, killed accidentally at the chaſe by DIANA, with ſuch torrents of tears, that ſhe was turned into a ſpring. The water is remarkable for the ſweetneſs of its taſte. The fountain is adorned with white marble, a ſtatue of APOLLO, and a bas-relief repreſenting the fight between ULYSSES and the ſuitors.

The citadel is built upon the top of Acrocorinthus, and is reckoned both by the natural ſituation of the place, and the advantages it has received from art, impregnable. From hence you have the fineſt proſpect imaginable of the Ionian and Ægean ſeas. Whilſt we were viewing the citadel, we ſaw three Corinthian gallies engaged with as many Athenian; the latter ſeemed to be ſuperior, till two more ſailing from Cenchrea to join their countrymen, they were obliged to bear away before the reinforcement came up. The baths at Corinth are magnificent, particularly thoſe of NEPTUNE; at the entrance are two ſtatues of the god leaning on an anchor, and DIANA in an hunting dreſs. The aqueducts and fountains are numerous, and give a coolneſs to the city in the greateſt heats of ſummer. One called the fountain of Lerna, is ſurrounded with rows of trees, and ſupported by marble columns, and there are ſeats round it, covered with

tapiſtry. Its neighbourhood to the gymnaſium and muſic theatre render it the moſt frequented of any in the city. They boaſt here of ſeveral pieces of the ſculptor DÆDALUS, which though rough and unpoliſhed ſhew a fire and ſpirit, that ſupply the want of correctneſs.

The Corinthians are much inclined to eaſe and diverſion; the maſculine ſimplicity of Sparta is unknown to them, neither do they cultivate learning like the Athenians. VENUS is the goddeſs, whom they adore moſt fervently; their ſtreets are crowded with her temples, and almoſt every day in the kalendar is marked out by ſome feſtival to her honour. The hoſpitality, which ſo particularly diſtiſtinguiſhes the Greeks, prevails here in the ſame degree that it does every where elſe. Our quality of enemies does not hinder us from being received with the politeneſs of neighbours and friends; and thou mayſt imagine there are no ſmall numbers of Athenians, who take this place in their way to Olympia. I have found no difficulty in prevailing with my company to ſtay here ſome days longer. I propoſe by it to gain time for making a diſpatch to the chief ſcribe. My delay proceeds likewiſe from a more private motive: HIPPIAS ſends me word, that he will join our Olympic party from Epheſus in a few days. We ſhall afterwards proceed directly through Argolis, Achaia, and Elis to the games. I kiſs thy robe, noble ſatrap, and bid thee adieu, wiſhing thou mayſt find the ſame entertainment in my letters, that I receive from the circumſtances, which occaſion them.

P.

LETTER

LETTER LXVIII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. From Corinth.

THE city, where I now am, potent lord, hath undergone ſeveral revolutions in its government. From a little obſcure town called Ephyra, it was raiſed into a kingdom by SYSIPHUS, whoſe poſterity reigned over it near 200 years. They were diſpoſſeſſed by the Heraclidæ or deſcendants of HERCULES; and theſe in their turn gave way to the Bacchidæ, a noble Corinthian family, which took the adminiſtration of affairs into their hands, and elected an annual magiſtrate out of their own body, whom they called the Prytanis. During their government the Corinthians planted the two famous colonies of Syracuſe and Corcyra, which are both grown to ſuch a height of power and wealth, as to have no ſort of dependance on their mother city. Thou knoweſt, that the quarrels of the latter with Corinth relating to Epidamnus were the firſt ſparks, that ſet Greece in a flame. CYPSELUS the ſon of LABDA of the race of the Bacchidæ, who for her deformity had been married out of it, fulfilled the Delphic oracle by diſſolving this ariſtocracy, and uſurping the throne. Through the mildneſs of his temper, and the popularity of his behaviour, he reigned quietly 30 years, and left the crown at his death to his ſon PERIANDER. The Corinthians ſtill retain the utmoſt abhorrence for the memory of this tyrant. His fear of the people

made him always keep a ſtrong guard about his perſon, and take off the heads of the moſt eminent citizens. Nor was his cruelty confined to the public; it exerted it ſelf equally in private life. He put his wife MELISSA to death at the inſtigation of his concubines, and baniſhed his ſon LYCOPHRON to Corcyra for reſenting the ill treatment of his mother. PERIANDER afterwards ſent for him to ſettle the ſucceſſion upon him; but the Corcyreans, apprehenſive that the old tyrant would come and reign over them, prevented it by killing the young prince. This news ſo afflicted the father, that he died for grief at the age of fourſcore. The Corinthians took hold of ſo favourable an opportunity to reſume their liberties, and eſtabliſhed a government, which is a mixture of ariſtocracy and democracy. The ſenate is perpetual, and choſen out of a certain number of the moſt ancient families; but the aſſemblies of the people have a large ſhare of power.

The ſituation and naval force of Corinth render it one of the moſt conſiderable ſtates in Greece. By the former they command the Ionian and Ægean ſea, and poſſeſs the only paſs of communication between Peloponneſus and the continent; for which reaſon the citadel or Acrocorinthus is uſually called the Eye, and the city the Fetter of Greece. Had XERXES, after forcing the ſtraits of Thermopylæ, marched directly to the Iſthmus, before the united forces of Greece were aſſembled there, and the fortifications compleated, which were raiſed to defend the country, he muſt have made himſelf maſter of Corinth, and would then have had two fine harbours for his ſhips to lie in,

and

and a ſecure retreat for his land army. Had he even loſt a battle, he might have waited here for reinforcements; nor would the lord of millions have been reduced to the neceſſity of croſſing the Helleſpont in a fiſher-boat. Suffer not, illuſtrious Satrap, the misfortunes of our anceſtors to diſcourage thoſe, who ſucceed them; let them rather ſerve to improve their conduct. When Perſia would revenge the ſhame, which ſhe ſuffered at Salamis, this ſhould be her firſt enterprize; and to render the ſucceſs more aſſured, I ſend plans of the citadel, and the entrance into the ports of Lechæum, and Cenchrea, which with great difficulty I have obtained. The Corinthian fleet is at preſent the moſt conſiderable in Greece next to the Athenian. They fitted out twenty five gallies againſt XERXES, made an equipment of ſixty in the war with Corcyra, and engaged PHORMIO laſt year with ſeventy ſail.

I tranſmit to thee incloſed the intelligence, which our laſt letters brought from Athens, by which thou mayſt perceive the ſtate of affairs there ſince my departure; and when I write from Olympia, I ſhall uſe the ſame method. Farewel.

Extract of a Letter from Athens.

A trireme is arrived from CLIPPIDES with advice, that upon his arrival before Mitylene, he found the inhabitants appriſed of his expedition, and that they had deferred their annual ſolemnity; that they utterly refuſed to comply with his demands, and had even attempted to ſurpriſe ſome of his ſhips, which by ſtreſs

of weather were ſeparated from the reſt, but were ſoon repulſed. As he apprehended he had not ſtrength to reduce the iſland, he had complied with their offer of making a ſuſpenſion of arms, and ſending over deputies to Athens.

Extract of another letter.

The deputies of Leſbos are juſt upon their departure, without ſucceſs. We ſuſpect, that they only came to gain time, ſince we have certain information, that their embaſſadors are on their way to the general aſſembly of the allies at Olympia. We are preparing a re-inforcement of twenty gallies for CLIPPIDES, and hear that ten from Corcyra have joined him; ſo that the port of Mitylene is entirely blocked up.

P.

LETTER LXIX.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES. From Olympia.

AS I am willing to hope, that my correſpondence is not diſagreeable, I ſhall proceed to lay before thee ſome farther particulars of my Olympic expedition. The firſt town of note we arrived at, after leaving Corinth, was Sicyon, a large and flouriſhing city, formerly governed by kings, but now a republican ſtate. From thence we croſſed the river Aſopus, and proceeded through the delighful plains of Arcadia and the territory of Elis to Olympia. We have found ſufficient

ſufficient employment ſince our arrival, in viewing the antiquities and curioſities of the place, particularly the temple of JUPITER OLYMPIUS, the grove called Altis, wherein it is built, and the plain of Pelops. The architect of this temple was LIBO the Elean. It is covered on the roof with marble cut in the form of tiles, and the ſhell of the ſtructure is white ſtone; on the ſummit of the dome ſtands a victory holding a golden buckler engraven with MEDUSA's head, a preſent of the Lacedemonians and Argives after the battle of Tanagra againſt the Athenians. The pediment of the front we obſerved was painted with the ſtory of PELOPS winning the daughter of OENOMAUS, king of Elis, at the chariot-courſe; and on the back pediment was repreſented the battle of the Centaurs with the Lapithæ. Two brazen gates afford a ſpacious entrance into the body of the temple, and two ranges of columns ſupporting two galleries raiſed exceeding high lead up to the throne of JUPITER. The eyes of every ſpectator muſt be immediately ſtruck with the ſtatue of that deity at the upper end, which the nearer it is approached the more it excites admiration. This ſtatue is univerſally eſteemed the maſter-piece of PHIDIAS, who took his idea of it from a ſublime deſcription in HOMER of that god. The materials are gold and ivory. The image has on its head a crown of gold reſembling the branches of an olive-tree. In his right hand he holds a Victory formed of gold and ivory; in his left a ſcepter exquiſitely poliſhed, inlaid with a variety of metals, and ſurmounted with an eagle. The mantle is gold, embroidered with various

animals and flowers. There is a ſerene majeſty in the look, which at once creates love and veneration, and puts one in mind of HOMER's epithet for him, *The father of gods and men.* The throne is anſwerable to the magnificence of the deity, who fills it. It is embelliſhed on all ſides with different ornaments. At the four corners of the throne are ſeen the graces and hours in a circling dance; at the bottom are two lions, one of which holds a ſhield in his paw, whereon is ſculptured the battle of THESEUS and the Amazons. Before all theſe is raiſed an encloſure breaſt-high, where the pencil of PANÆNUS has exerted itſelf in painting ſuch ſubjects, as may have a proper effect to animate thoſe ſpectators, who intend to enter the liſts. There is HERCULES relieving PROMETHEUS; the ſame hero ſupporting the globe in the room of ATLAS. The prieſt, who accompanied us, told us, that PHIDIAS, after he had finiſhed the ſtatue, having begged of JUPITER to give him ſome token, that his workmanſhip had not diſpleaſed him, immediately the pavement near him was ſtruck with lightning, and in memory of the miracle a brazen urn was placed over the ſpot. I could not help looking at a row of pillars in the ſanctuary, which are hung round with tablets of treaties between the Grecian ſtates, depoſited as it were under the guardianſhip of JUPITER. But their reverence to the ſupreme deity is not ſo powerful an incitement to preſerve the articles of them inviolate, as their intereſt or reſentment is to induce them to infringe them. Our company was with difficulty drawn away from viewing theſe wonderful

wonderful performances, which do ſo much honour to the Grecian maſters, to walk over the reſt of the temple, and particularly to ſurvey that noble collection of preſents and offerings, which are made either by victors at the games to ſhew their gratitude, or by princes and foreign ſtates to teſtify their veneration to the god. There are laid up in the ſacred treaſury vaſes emboſſed with gold, robes ſtiff with embroidery and gems, ſtatues and pictures, which not only dazzle, but fatigue the ſight. You ſee particularly a chariot and four brazen horſes ſent by CYNISCA, daughter of ARCHIDAMUS king of Sparta, the firſt perſon of her ſex, who won the chariot-prize at Olympia.

When we had ſatisfied our curioſity within the temple, we were led out of a gate in the northern ſide into the Pelopion, or plain of Pelops, which is planted with rows of trees, interſperſed with innumerable altars and ſtatues of divinities and heroes. The Pelopion and Altis incloſe above ſixty of the former alone, conſecrated to the different deities of Greece. Near the gate ſtands an altar to Olympian JUPITER of a very ſingular ſtructure; for it is wholly built out of aſhes from the thighs of the ſacrificed victims. Several ſteps lead to the top; the firſt half are ſtone, the others are made of a cement of aſhes mixed with water from the river Alpheus, which runs by Olympia round the walls of the Altis. And in the neighbourhood of it are erected the ſtatues of the moſt renowned amongſt thoſe, who have gained prizes at the games, with inſcriptions ſignifying the number of crowns they have won, and ſometimes that they were the firſt, who

conquered at ſuch an exerciſe. Here is one of the famous MILO of Crotona, who after winning ſix prizes at Olympia and as many at Delphi, is come, though advanced in years, to put in his claim for the thirteenth victory. A little way out of the town near the mountain Cronius are monuments to the eternal infamy of ſuch, as either by fraud or corruption have obtained the prize; and the expences are defray'd out of the fines ſet upon them. An inſcription on the ſtatue of one EUPOLUS records, that he had bribed three of his competitors at wreſtling, and was the firſt, who had tainted the ſanctity of the games. It concludes with an admonition, that the Olympic palm was not to be acquired by money, but addreſs and vigour alone. I ſhall juſt mention the temple of JUNO, which ſtands north of the Pelopion, whoſe ſplendor and magnificence is far eclipſed by that of the thunderer. The ſtatues are many of them in the old taſte. The greateſt rarity is a coffer preſented by CYPSELUS tyrant of Corinth, which would take up a letter to deſcribe fully. The ſides are ornamented in the richeſt manner with painting and bas-reliefs, that include the moſt remarkable ſubjects in the fabulous hiſtory of Greece. In the way leading to the Prytaneum is a ſtatue of JUPITER erected at the joint coſt of the Grecian ſtates, that fought againſt MARDONIUS at Plateæ. The names of them, beginning with the Lacedemonians, followed by the Athenians and the reſt in order, are engraved on the baſis of the pedeſtal.

I can aſſure thee, potent lord, that nothing I have yet ſeen in Greece or Aſia equals in any degree the magnificence

magnificence and elegance, that appear in the ſtructures here. One may ſay, that architecture, painting, and ſculpture have not only united their utmoſt efforts, but even exhauſted the ſecrets of their arts, to render Olympia worthy its tutelar deity, and the games exhibited to his honour. I have neither memory nor leiſure to relate the tenth part of the various entertainment, which this place affords me; and from what I have already ſaid, thou wilt not wonder, that every fifth year renders it the univerſal reſort both of natives and foreigners. I cannot conclude more properly, than by laying before thee the beſt account I am able to collect upon the ſpot, of the origin and alterations, which have happened in theſe ancient and celebrated games. There are two ſtories equally prevalent in the country relating to their firſt inſtitution; the one aſcribes it to the Curetes, JUPITER's tutors, the other to the god himſelf, after the defeat of the Titans. They ſuffered afterwards long interruptions, and were ſeverally renewed by HERCULES, and PELOPS, when he had won HIPPODAMIA the daughter of OENOMAUS at a chariot-race. This part of their hiſtory is fabulous and uncertain; but I think all agree, that they were eſtabliſhed on their preſent footing by IPHITUS, a deſcendant of OXYLUS king of Elis, about 408 years after the taking of Troy. It was at that period they took a regular form; then gymnaſiums and places of exerciſe were ſet up, and directors of the games or Hellanodicæ appointed. Thoſe officers are now nine in number, choſen by lot from amongſt the principal inhabitants of Elis, whoſe territory is declared ſacred,

and

and thoſe accounted impious and ſacrilegious, who invade it. From enjoying theſe honours and immunities, Elis is become one of the beſt peopled ſtates in Greece. Every one, of what nation or quality ſoever, who intends to be a competitor in the games, is obliged to preſent himſelf before the magiſtates in the Prytaneum, and take an oath at the altar of JUPITER there, that he had for the ten preceding months performed a kind of novitiate in the exerciſes, which he propoſes to appear in at the games; and that he would ſtrictly adhere to the terms preſcribed for each exerciſe. Then a herald with a loud voice demands, if no one preſent can accuſe the candidate of any crime or miſdemeanor, which renders him unworthy to contend for the crown of olive. If no objections are made, the name of the perſon is enrolled in a public regiſter, and himſelf diſmiſſed till the day of trial. The wreſtlers are divided into two claſſes, that of children, and that of men; the former are admitted from the age of twelve to ſeventeen. Women are not allowed under pain of death to be preſent at any part of the ſolemnity.

As the games, which are always fixed for the full moon in July, will begin in a few days, thou mayſt expect, that this letter will ſoon be followed by another containing a full account of the whole repreſentation. Farewel.

P.

LETTER

LETTER LXX.

HYDASPES to CLEANDER.

I CAN no longer contain myſelf, CLEANDER, from returning my thanks for thoſe agreeable letters I have received from thee on thy journey to Olympia. I value thy friendſhip above all I have contracted, ſince it is ſo far from cooling in a foreign climate, that it grows warmer in abſence, and perpetually turns thee back to thy country and acquaintance, amidſt a variety of new objects to engage thy attention.

I imagine e'er this time thou art informed of SACAS's conſpiracy by the noble GOBRYAS, and the ſeveral ſteps, which have been already taken in that affair. The queen-mother and the fair Damaſcan having found the king inexorable to their prayers in favour of the criminal, at laſt withdrew their interceſſion. Nothing then remained but to put the ſentence of the ſupreme council in execution: however it was firſt thought proper, that he ſhould be privately examined before MEGABYZUS and the chief ſcribe. Upon that occaſion, I am told, diſcoveries of importance were extorted from him by the rack; and that he has accuſed many of the ſatraps of Media, who were involved in the ſame guilt. This report is a good deal confirmed by the expreſs, who went lately into that province with orders from our potent monarch, that PANDATES, MINDUS, and OXYATHRES, three Median lords, ſhould repair to Babylon without delay.

He brings word, that the latter is fled, and that his two accomplices, not ſuſpecting the danger, are ſecured by a ſtrong guard. GOBRYAS is much buſied in watching the intrigues of thoſe, who are endeavouring to trace out from what quarter theſe horrid practices were laid open. A few days ſince the perfidious eunuch received the juſt reward of his treaſons, and was boated, according to the ſevere penalties inflicted on traitors by the law of Perſia. The hunting ſeat, that belonged to him in the foreſt of Niſa, and all his riches are confiſcated to the king's uſe, which are valued at more than an hundred thouſand darics. I have myſelf ſome deſign of applying for a grant of the former, as it will be a very convenient receſs for me, whenever a change in the miniſtry, the death of my royal maſter, or the infirmities of old age oblige me to leave the toilſome attendance of a court-life.

PYRACMON the Lacedemonian agent is gone back to Sparta, without an audience of leave. For as he has never appeared regularly in the character of a public miniſter during his ſtay here, by reaſon of his obſtinate refuſal to comply with the ceremony of proſtration at his arrival, it was impoſſible for me to admit him into the king's preſence. At the ſame time that the ruling magiſtrates in Lacedemon have recalled PYRACMON, they have ſent us another in his room, whoſe name is NICANDER. From the judgment I have been able to form of him, he is as ſtrange a creature as his countryman, and is poſſeſſed of all the uncouthneſs and indelicacy, which ſeem inherent in every member of that military republic. As ſoon as he came within the walls

of

of the palace, he deſired to be preſented to ARTAXERXES as a commiſſioner from Thebes, that he might avoid going through the forms of an audience in the quality of a Lacedemonian; and being aſked, if he had brought any powers from that ſtate to treat with the Great King, he replied, yes, but that his inſtructions were more conſiderable from his native city. I was ordered by the miniſters of our ſublime court to tell him, that this was regarded as a trifling evaſion of the homage paid to our ſovereign by the miniſters of every ſtate; and that though he intended it to preſerve (as he proudly thought) the dignity of a Spartan, yet ſuch mean and ſhifting arts were much below the character of politeneſs, which the Greeks aſſumed to themſelves; and he muſt conſent to be received as an ambaſſador from Lacedemon, or not at all. The delivery of this meſſage had its due weight; and in a ſurly manner he ſubmitted. But I obſerved, when I conducted him into the royal chamber, agreeably to the uſual ceremony, he drop'd a ring, which he wore upon his finger, and in ſtooping to recover it, made an aukward reverence to our monarch. I ſaw immediately by the reſentment, which ſparkled in the king's eyes, that this behaviour gave offence, and the conference was ſhort; but that wiſe counſellor MEGABYZUS has adviſed him to ſuffer reaſons of policy to ſuperſede the motions of anger.

To give thee a further inſight into the manners of the man, I muſt tell thee of a circumſtance, which will excite thy laughter; that in all his converſations with GOBRYAS he diſdains the offered civility of that

that courteous miniſter, by throwing his body on the floor of the apartment, where they meet together, inſtead of reſting himſelf upon the ſofa of ſtate. It was intimated to me one day, that it would be proper to invite NICANDER to an entertainment of dancing and muſic, which was ordered that evening in the magnificent hall of DARIUS. I took INTAPHERNES along with me, and we went about noon to wait upon NICANDER. We were introduced to him without any form, and found him dining alone very heartily on a meſs of the famous black broth, which I conjecture from the coarſe appearance of it muſt be a deteſtable repaſt to any but a Lacedemonian ſtomach. The perſon, who attended him, was an Helot ſlave, whom he had brought along with him to Babylon, becauſe of his happy talent in preparing it. He received my invitation very coldly, and anſwered me with roughneſs, declaring, that he came upon a matter of buſineſs, not a party of pleaſure. We left him with a contempt for the narrowneſs of his temper, and a thorough perſuaſion of his incapacity to ſerve in foreign negotiations.

CRATIPPUS, the ſophiſt of Rhodes, who has been employed for ſome time time in GOBRYAS's office, informed me yeſterday under the ſeal of ſecrecy, that he was going upon a private expedition to Sparta; and that he ſhould be very glad to maintain a correſpondence with one, whom he had ſo high an opinion of as yourſelf. He ſaid, although that city was at a conſiderable diſtance from Athens, yet, as he fancied, you and he ſhould be almoſt the only well-wiſhers to the

the king of Perſia in the territories of Greece, he would certainly find a method of communicating his thoughts to you frequently and without reſerve. I congratulate thee, CLEANDER, on being joint-labourer with a perſon of CRATIPPUS's uncommon parts and learning. He is a man of ſuch ſingular dexterity and addreſs, that whether he converſes with the ſuperſtitious Ægyptians or the effeminate Ionians, whether he conforms to the ſimplicity of the Perſians or the ſplendor of the Medes, he is equally chearful and agreeable. In a word, he ſeems deſigned by nature for a citizen of the world; and I dare ſay, will be as much pleaſed with the water-creſſes and brown loaves of Sparta, as with all the rich wines and luxury of Aſia. Such a character as this, which I deſcribe to thee, can only be the reſult of good ſenſe and a ſuperior underſtanding.

I hope thou and I, my friend, ſhall never know, what it is to be like the deſpicable NICANDER, but rather imitate the rational turn of CRATIPPUS. The manners of various nations are generally as different as their political intereſts; and it argues a littleneſs of mind, to think the peculiarities of one's own country are drawn out of the depths of wiſdom, while the cuſtoms of another deſerve to be branded with folly. Thou wilt ſmile perhaps at a courtier, who concludes with the ſpirit of a philoſopher; but I leave it to thy determination, whether a low partiality to the manners of thoſe, who inhabit one ſpot upon the globe, in oppoſition to the reſt of the world, is not a kind of immorality, as well as a ſubject of ridicule.

From Babylon. C.

LETTER

LETTER LXXI.

SMERDIS to CLEANDER.

I DO not know, whether I am more pleaſed or aſhamed at the letters I receive from thee. I ought not to want a ſpur to ſuch an unequal correſpondence; for while thou tranſmitteſt to me foreign arts and knowledge, the boaſted commodities of Greece, all the return I make is from the cheap and familiar produce of our own country. Thy letters convince me of the vanity of Greece in valuing herſelf upon ſcience, as her property, which thou haſt gained ſuch an inſight into, (though it is matter of amuſement to thee, rather than any part of thy buſineſs,) that thou couldſt eaſily tranſplant it hither, were it compatible with the policy of our government. But the true Perſian maxims would make the refinements of Greece needleſs by contracting our wants, and ſecuring us from the incroachments of luxury, which requires ſo many miniſtring and attendant arts in her retinue. To ſpeak truth, and draw the bow, is indeed an abridgment of a true Perſian education; which implies, that our bodies ſhould be fitted for the ſervice of our country, and our minds habituated to ſincerity and virtue. The faculties of man, I preſume, cannot be laid out in a more laudable ſervice. How little pleaſing ſoever the ſimplicity of this plan may be to a Greek, the great ends may more certainly, and with leſs danger of corruption, be attained by it, which

which they propoſe to themſelves by more indirect and laborious methods of ſtudy. I ſuppoſe the people of Athens deſire to hear truth, when they liſten to their orators, and theſe are thought beſt qualified to deliver it; yet no man will ſay, that to ſpeak truth is an art, or requires any labour of the brain. What then is meant by the talent of eloquence, which is attained with ſuch difficulty? If it be to conceal truth, or to diſguiſe falſhood, ſo that it ſhall not be known, or to give it ſo amiable a dreſs, that we ſhall receive it knowingly; this indeed requires ſkill, but is no great accompliſhment; nor ſhould I think myſelf at all obliged to a man for being at ſo much pains to lead me out of my way. I gueſs the young philoſopher you ſpeak of is not addicted to oratory. Doth SOCRATES, who profeſſes and teaches others to ſtudy themſelves, affect it? I ſcarce believe ſo; the man, who ſearches his own breaſt, finds, that truth has a right to precedence there, and that the tongue ſhould interpret the heart. SOCRATES has prudently diſengaged himſelf from the boaſted wiſdom of his country, by profeſſing his ignorance and diſregard of it, in compariſon of that, which tends immediately to the cultivation of the mind, and eſtabliſhing an univerſal rule for human actions. This no doubt muſt be his aim, and he ſeems to bid fair for ſucceſs; for he, who would preſcribe to others, muſt learn from himſelf what maxims he could be content to be governed by. He muſt firſt draw reaſon from his own breaſt; and then it will be ratified by common conſent, when it comes to be reapplied to the underſtanding of others. The ſophiſt impoſes

upon us falſe principles; and if our reaſon be too buſiy in examining them, he intangles it in inextricable ſubtilties. The legiſlator demands our aſſent by the terror of his power; but SOCRATES, like a true rationaliſt, affects not to ſubdue our paſſions without leaving every man an appeal to his own judgment, and thereby diſtinguiſhes the moraliſt from the politic legiſlator and falſe philoſopher, who equally aim at ſubjecting us to their own abſolute authority, under pretence of reforming our prejudices. This wiſe man's ſtudy of himſelf may be attended with great conſequences in bringing to light the dictates of reaſon, which are of undeniable authority, and nothing leſs than the original revelation of OROMASDES. The divine will being thus aſcertained, the wiſe and virtuous will have a rational expectation of a recompence to their obedience; and the well-grounded hope of this reward will add weight to the reaſons of the moraliſt, and confirm his whole ſyſtem. It is eaſy for us, whom uncorrupt traditions and the books of ZOROASTER have inſtructed in worthy notions of the deity, to think what is ſo agreeable to our reaſon may be traced out by it alone. But if human reaſon is inſufficient to penetrate ſo far into the divine oeconomy, may OROMASDES put himſelf in the way of this glorious inquirer; and thus perhaps ſhall his doctrine diffuſe itſelf univerſally, and the holy flame be lighted up in the temples of the weſt. Thou ſeemeſt, CLEANDER, to have no mean opinion of the Greek philoſophers, and perhaps mayſt think them worth undeceiving in ſome wrong conceptions of the Perſian religion. When

OTANES,

OTANES, the great deſcendant of ZURDUSHT, accompanied XERXES into Greece, he ſhed the firſt dawn of divine light amongſt them; but they are perpetually miſinformed by travellers, who attend only to appearances, and repreſent ſome external rites, which they obſerve amongſt us, as the ſubſtance of our worſhip. I have been told, they have adopted ſome of the rites of Egypt, which the Egyptians themſelves uſed only as a ſymbol; ſo inſenſible are they to what is myſterious and exalted. They have no other than viſible objects of adoration; and their apprehenſion ſeems at a loſs in every thing, that is veiled from the ſenſe. Thus becauſe we religiouſly preſerve the purity of the elements, and think it impious by any unnatural commixture to pollute them, which in the creation were ſeparated and ordered to be kept without defilement, they call us worſhippers of theſe elements; a miſtake, which HERODOTUS himſelf is fallen into. I once met with a Greek, whoſe ignorance of my character made him uſe his national freedom towards me: Greece, ſaid he, has no reaſon to regret the attempts, which Perſia has made on her liberty, ſince ſhe has been rewarded with immortal honour; and the barbarity of XERXES will be an eternal ſtain to Perſia, who deſtroyed all the temples of Greece out of a pretended diſlike of the uſe of them, while ſtill they were approved in Perſia. I told him, they were deſtroyed, becauſe they were ſaid to contain a God within them, which was found to be no other perhaps than an image of wood, which had been made and placed there by its worſhippers. To this he gave me

what he thought a very ſufficient anſwer, that inſtead of burning the temples, XERXES ſhould have ſet fire to the images, which would in that condition have been fit objects for a Perſian worſhipper. The petulance of the man betrayed his ignorance, who had not made himſelf ſo far acquainted with us, as to know, that fire was a ſacred ſymbol, which ZERDUSHT brought down from heaven, to remind us, that this element is not more neceſſary to the bodies, than the cheriſhing influence of the deity is to the ſouls of men.

May thy wiſdom, CLEANDER, contribute to the reducing theſe contemptuous Greeks to the yoke of Perſia, which they have hitherto ſurpriſingly eſcaped. Who would have thought but XERXES had joined them to his dominions, when he linked the two continents together with his fleet! How near was DATIS executing his great maſter's order, who was commanded to ſend the inhabitants of Athens and Eretria in chains to Perſia? Eretria was incompaſſed and taken, and all its proud citizens ſent hither to gratify the will of their conqueror, where they now mourn their ſervitude. And had ſucceſs accompanied our arms at Marathon, the city, where thou now reſideſt, had been unpeopled, and her ſons tranſported to cultivate the deſert lands of Perſia, or ſcattered over our numerous provinces had been utterly deprived of all hope of uniting themſelves again into a community. Farewel.

From Balch. H.

LETTER

LETTER LXXII.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES.

THE games, which raiſed ſo great an expectation, and drew together ſuch a multitude of ſpectators, are now over; and I believe moſt of thoſe, who were preſent, employed like like me in giving an account to their abſent friends of the remarkable circumſtances, that attended them. On the day appointed for the opening of the games, the whole aſſembly had early taken their places in the ſtadium of Olympia. The ſpot, where the combatants engage, is in the form of an arena or pit, and covered with ſand. The ſeats riſe round it one above another. The two firſt days out of the five allotted for the celebration of this ſolemnity were appointed for the wreſtling and boxing. The names of the candidates for the prize in thoſe exerciſes were read over before the people by an herald. Then a ſilver urn was produced, containing a number of balls equal to that of the combatants, and each pair was matched together, who drew out two balls, on which the ſame letters of the alphabet were inſcribed. After the competitors had rendered their bodies firm and ſupple by rubbing and pouring oil upon them, they beſmeared them with fine ſand to give the better hold for grappling. Several matches went forward at the ſame time. To obtain the victory it is requiſite to give two falls, and renew the combat three times. If a wreſtler, who is thrown, pulls his

adverſary down with him, they muſt grapple together upon the ground, till one of them getting uppermoſt conſtrains the other to aſk for mercy. Then the acclamations of the ſpectators, which continue with various interruptions whilſt the trial of ſkill laſts, are redoubled. The Hellanodicæ preſent the victor with the crown of olive, a branch of palm, and a robe, on the very ſpot, where he was engaged. In this equipage, preceded by a herald, he croſſes the ſtadium amidſt the ſhouts and praiſes of that innumerable concourſe of people. His name and country are proclaimed by ſound of trumpet; flowers, girdles, money and other preſents of that nature are thrown upon him, as he paſſes along. An odd accident happened to MILO of Crotona. That famous wreſtler preſented himſelf, but found no antagoniſt; upon which the preſidents of the games called him to preſent him with the crown, but as he advanced forwards to receive it, he fell down. The people immediately cried out, that one, who could not keep himſelf upon his legs, did not deſerve the honours due to a conqueror. The old man looked round, and anſwered with a great deal of ſpirit, "'Tis true I have got one accidental fall, but "I would willingly ſee any man amongſt you, who "could give me a ſecond." When theſe matches were over, the ſtadium was left clear for the boxers. They were armed for this rude encounter with the cæſtus, a leathern gauntlet, which folds round the fingers and upper part of the hand, and is faſtened at the wriſt, and ſtrengthned on the outſide with plates of iron or lead. I muſt own, though the agility and

ſuppleneſs

ſuppleneſs of the wreſtlers, and their various artifices to give or avoid a fall, afforded me ſome pleaſure, I could not behold without a ſecret horror the rough blows, which the boxers ſo unmercifully dealt on each other. It is no uncommon thing at theſe matches to ſee a contuſion raiſed on the face, an eye ſtruck out, or a jaw bone cracked by the tremendous blows of the cæſtus. ANDROLICHUS one of the boxers appeared like an object, who intended to excite the charity rather than the applauſes of the aſſembly. He loſt an eye at Piſa, his foreteeth at Nemea, had his noſe flatned at Delphi, and was carried off for dead here. That thou mayſt the better judge, how diſagreeable the ſpectacle muſt be to one, in whom cuſtom has not effaced the ſoft impreſſions of humanity, I will tell thee a remarkable incident, to which I was myſelf an eye-witneſs. Two boxers CREUGAS and DAMOXENES agreed, on the point of engaging, to give each other notice of every blow. The agreement was ill kept; for DAMOXENES having bid his adverſary lift up his hand, ſtruck him on the ſide with ſuch violence, that partly with the force of the blow, partly the ſharpneſs of his nails, he pierced his belly, and tore out his entrails. CREUGAS expired on the ſpot. The crown was decreed him, though dead, and DAMOXENES was puniſhed for his barbarity with perpetual baniſhment. The boxer, who ſhewed moſt ſkill, was THEAGENES of Syracuſe. He had acquired ſuch a ſtrength in his wriſts, that merely by parrying the blows of his competitor, and holding him at arm's length, he obliged him out of wearineſs to reſign the victory.

The Pancratiaſts, Pentathloi, and the Throwers of the Diſcus made their appearance on the third day. The performance of the firſt is a mixture of wreſtling and boxing; it borrows from the one thoſe violent contorſions of the limbs and ſhakes of the body, from the other the art of ſtriking and avoiding a blow. It is one of the rougheſt and moſt dangerous exerciſes, of which we had an inſtance in ARACHION of Sparta. That brave Pancratiaſt having received ſo violent a ſqueeze from his antagoniſt, that he was on the point of being ſtrangled, had ſtrength enough remaining to break the other's jaw, and obliged him to aſk for mercy, though the victor himſelf expired the moment after. The Hellanodicæ ordered ARACHION to be crowned, as he lay dead on the ſtadium. The expreſſions of joy and ſatisfaction in the aſſembly at the brave action of the Spartan are not to be deſcribed.

The Pentathloi are a particular ſet of combatants, who have acquired ſuch a maſtery at wreſtling, boxing, throwing the diſcus, running, and caſting the javelin, as to perform in each the ſame day. They make it a rule never to match a Pentathlos with another, who has made one of theſe exerciſes alone his employment; as they ſuppoſe very reaſonably, that a perſon, who has divided his time between ſo many different occupations, cannot be equal to one, who has applied his whole time to be perfect in a ſingle exerciſe.

The diſcus is a huge maſs of iron of a roundiſh ſhape, and poliſhed ſurface. Thoſe, who throw it, lean the whole weight of their body upon one of their legs, which they ſtep forwards; they whirl the diſcus round

round horizontally, and caſt it from them with their utmoſt force. He, who throws fartheſt, obtains the prize.

The fourth day was taken up with the runners on foot, and the race-horſes. The ſtadium for the former is compoſed of three parts; the entrance, which is marked by a barrier of wood; the middle, which is a riſing ground, where the crowns are placed in ſight of their competitors; and the goal, which is diſtinguiſhed by a large tree or poſt. There are two ſorts of racers; thoſe, who run naked, and thoſe, who are armed with a light helmet, a target, and a ſort of buſkin. There are likewiſe three ſorts of courſes. The courſe of the ſtadium, which is only from the barrier to the goal; the diaulos, which is twice the length of the ſtadium; and the dolicus, which is much longer than either. DORICUS of Tarſus in Cilicia won the prize; and a poet has made an epigram, the turn of which is, that the "barrier and the goal are "the only places, where the young Cilician is ſeen; "for no one can ſay, he was ever perceived in the "middle of the courſe."

In the afternoon we removed to the hippodrome or horſe-courſe, which was laid out by the architect CLEATAS, and is looked upon as one of the curioſities of Greece. That part of it called the barrier, where the horſes and cars aſſemble before they enter the liſts, by the diſpoſition of the ground and buildings round it, reſembles the prow of a ſhip. It grows narrower towards the end, and forms a kind of beak juſt at the place where it opens into the courſe. In the midſt

midſt of the barrier is an altar; on the top ſtands a brazen eagle, which is made to raiſe itſelf, and extend its wings as a ſignal for the races to begin. On the ſides are vaulted buildings, which ſerve for ſtands to the horſes and chariots, till they proceed to take their places as the lots determine them. The courſe itſelf is divided into two parts, a terraſs, and a hill that riſes gently from the plain. There are two goals; at the one is a ſtatue of HIPPODAMIA holding a chaplet to crown PELOPS, at the other an altar to the genius TARAXIPPUS. It is obſerved, that at this altar the horſes take ſuch a ſudden fright, as frequently to overthrow their riders. The ſuperſtitious Greeks attribute it to a divine impulſe, and therefore make vows to obtain the favour of TARAXIPPUS.

In the horſe-races I particularly admired ſome expert riders, who being upon the back of one horſe, and leading a ſecond, would leap from one to the other with ſurpriſing agility. Nor is the addreſs of a mare belonging to PHIDOLAS of Corinth to be left unmentioned. Though her maſter fell off in the beginning of the race, ſhe continued her courſe in the ſame manner as if he had kept his ſeat, turned round the goal, redoubled her vigor at the ſound of the trumpet, and came in the firſt. The Hellanodicæ ordered PHIDOLAS to be crowned, who has obtained permiſſion from the Eleans to erect a ſtatue to the memory of his mare Aura.

The fifth and laſt day was taken up in the chariot-courſes, which I thought were much the fineſt part of the ſight. The ſplendor of the equipages, as they

were drawn out in a long line before the lists, the neighing of the horses, the cries of the charioteers, and the applauses of that vast concourse of spectators, formed a very cheerful and agreeable entertainment. Each chariot was drawn by four horses all in front; the two best are always outermost. The chariot-race was as usual full of a great many incidents. The car of ADMETUS the Corinthian broke down in turning round the goal, and two others, which followed behind, run foul upon it, and overturned their drivers. My friend PHILOCLES's horses, which were very mettlesome, flew out so furiously at the altar of TARAXIPPUS, that with the violence of the shock he had like to have lost his seat. He kept it with some difficulty; but a chariot of ALCIBIADES had an opportunity to pass by him, and obtain the second prize. That young Athenian, who had no less than seven chariots, which entered the lists, won the first, second, and fourth prizes. PHILOCLES came in for the third.

On the evening of the day, on which this solemnity ended, the Hellanodicæ made a supper, according to custom, in the Prytaneum of Olympia, for the victors at the different exercises.

ALCIBIADES entertained the whole assembly the next in a manner answerable to the magnificence, wherein he had appeared at the games. EMPEDOCLES of Agrigentum gave us the most extraordinary regale. As he is a Pythagorean, both fish and flesh are absolutely forbid by the doctrines of his sect; and therefore he had an ox made of paste composed of myrrh, franckin-

franckincenſe, and ſpices, which he diſtributed by pieces to all who preſented themſelves.

The different diſpoſitions of my five companions have rendred the pleaſure ariſing from the company and diverſions of Olympia peculiar to each. The pious and humane PHILEMON renews thoſe long-contracted friendſhips, which war claims a right of interrupting for a time; and is never more happy, than in trying to infuſe ſentiments of peace and unanimity towards Athens in his Spartan and Corinthian acquaintance. CLINIAS has complained to me with ſome concern, that the learned performances repeated here do not equal thoſe he remembers formerly, when PINDAR charmed the ears of Greece by his odes, and HERODOTUS excited their attention to his hiſtory. The polite CHLORUS boaſts, that he was the firſt man, who congratulated ALCIBIADES upon gaining three prizes at the chariot-courſe, and was in return the firſt of the aſſembly invited to ſupper the next evening by that magnificent Athenian. HIPPIAS is not ſo far loſt to his buſineſs as a merchant amidſt the pleaſures of the place, but he has found time to drive ſeveral advantageous bargains. As to PHILOCLES, he thinks himſelf arrived to the higheſt pitch of happineſs and glory, to which a mortal can attain. For the Greeks, potent lord, hold their countrymen, who conquer at theſe games, in no ſmall degree of eſteem; they are not only maintained at the public charge for the reſt of their lives, but exempted from the burden of taxes and civil employments.

Thou

Thou wilt, I believe, agree with me in concluding, that though ſuch exerciſes as give a graceful appearance to the body, and form it for military ſervice, ſhould be cultivated in all wiſe ſtates; yet thoſe ought to be diſcountenanced, which tend only to breed up a ſet of idle perſons, who by making the art of maiming the limbs of their fellow creatures their only employment, are in effect rendered fit for nothing elſe. However, one cannot help admiring that paſſionate love of glory, which urges on the Greeks to contend ſo earneſtly for the crown of olive. It brings to my mind a generous ſaying of TIGRANES the Mede: being informed, that the formidable invaſion of XERXES had not interrupted the Olympic games, and told at the ſame time in what the reward conſiſted, he cried out in raptures, even in the preſence of his ſovereign, "Heavens, MARDONIUS, againſt what men are we come "to fight, who do not make wealth the object of "their contention, but fame!" Adieu.

P.

From Olympia.

LETTER LXXIII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. From Olympia.

THE Mitylenian embaſſadors had a few days ago a public audience of the Peloponneſian allies in the temple of JUPITER OLYMPIUS. The chief of the embaſſy laid before them in a long and artful harangue the reaſons, which had induced his ſtate to renounce

renounce their dependance upon Athens. He begun with deſiring the aſſembly not to be prejudiced againſt his ſtate, becauſe after continuing ſo many years in a firm alliance with the Athenians during the time of their proſperity, they now deſerted them in that of their diſtreſs. But, he ſaid, as the true motive of the treaty, which they had made with the Athenians, was not to aſſiſt them in ſubduing the reſt of the Greeks, but to join in the common cauſe againſt the Barbarians; ſo when once the ambitious views of Athens made her uſurp an unreaſonable ſuperiority over her neighbours, thoſe ties were naturally diſſolved. That the favours, which Athens had beſtowed upon them, and the lenity, with which they had been treated, though they carried a fair appearance, were intended to keep the Leſbians from ſtirring, whilſt that aſpiring republic was inſenſibly enſlaving the reſt of her allies. That therefore no charge of ingratitude to benefactors could lie againſt his countrymen, who only prevented by a timely precaution thoſe dangers, which ſurrounded them. He next repreſented the advantages, which the Peloponneſians would gain by receiving them into their alliance; that beſides ſtrengthening their fleet with a large ſquadron, they would have an opportunity by the convenient ſituation of Leſbos, to intercept thoſe ſupplies, which enabled Athens to continue the war. He ſet forth in exaggerated colours the weak condition of the latter exhauſted by the plague, the expences of their preparations, and the loſſes they had ſuſtained; and concluded with ſolemnly entreating them in the name

of

of Olympian JUPITER, in whoſe temple they were aſſembled, not to abandon a people, who were the firſt that had recourſe to their protection, but to ſhew they deſerved the glorious title, which they aſſumed, of protectors of the diſtreſſed, and deliverers of Greece. The aſſembly, with whom this ſpeech had no ſmall weight, after a ſhort deliberation returned a favourable anſwer, and unanimouſly decreed, that the Leſbians ſhould be comprehended in the Peloponneſian league. Deputies from the united ſtates have held ſeveral conferences in the Prytaneum of Olympia, to debate on the preſent poſture of their affairs. PHILEMON, who watches narrowly over all their deſigns, has diſpatched a courier to Athens with what intelligence he has been able to procure. He ſuſpects, that they intend to form a general rendevouz at Corinth, and attack Athens both by ſea and land. It is certain, that orders have been iſſued out for providing immediately a large number of machines for tranſporting ſhips over land. The allies are now in the midſt of their harveſt; and it will occaſion ſome delays to take the people from their work, which will give the Athenians time to prepare a force ſufficient to oppoſe the attempts of their enemies. This ſudden turn of affairs, and the vigorous reſolutions of the allies determine the company I came with to ſet out early to-morrow on their return to Athens. The news I received from HYDASPES, that the Perſian court intended to ſend a private agent to Sparta, afforded me no ſmall pleaſure. The miniſtry from over-looking both ſides of the game in a conjuncture very intereſting

ing to Perſia, cannot fail of directing their councils on the ſureſt grounds, particularly when ſo important a commiſſion is entruſted to one of CRATIPPUS's abilities. Noble ſatrap, I kiſs thy robe, and bid thee farewel.

The firſt of the month Scirrophorion.

Extract of a letter from Athens.

Diſpatches from CLIPPIDES were yeſterday read in the aſſembly of the people. He gives an account in them, that the whole iſland, except Methymna, had declared in favour of the Mitylenians; that the reinforcements he had received from thence, and our allies, enabled him to form two camps againſt the city, one on the north, the other on the ſouth ſide, and to block up their ports ſo entirely, that no ſuccours could arrive by ſea. The beſieged made a vigorous ſally, but were repulſed. Some embaſſadors from Thebes and Sparta (he adds) had found means to get into the town, and encouraged the inhabitants to hold out with the hopes of a ſpeedy relief.

P.

LETTER

LETTER LXXIV.

GOBRYAS to CLEANDER.

THY letters to Hydaſpes on the Olympic games, and thy remarks on the general appearance of the country, as thou haſt found it on thy way to that celebrated ſolemnity, were highly entertaining to him, MEGABYZUS, and myſelf. For thou haſt diſcovered in them a knowledge of the antiquities of Greece, ſuperior to what one might reaſonably expect from thy ſtay in it, and an elegance of taſte, which nature alone could give thee. The Great King was ſo particularly entertained with the copies, which he ſaw of them, that he has depoſited them for his own peruſal in the royal cabinet. He was pleaſed to tell me, "they "opened a new ſcene to him; that he had journied "in fancy, like a quiet and inoffenſive traveller, over "a conſiderable part of thoſe territories, where his "great father had formerly carried ruin and deſola-"tion." Two of the Median lords, whom SACAS accuſed upon the rack, were conducted to Babylon by a detachment of Doryphori, under the command of ARASPES. They underwent an examination of three hours in MEGABYZUS's apartment; but it was with difficulty we were able to extort any thing from them, and the teſtimonials they gave of their behaviour have almoſt convinced ſome of the ſupreme council, that no material reproach can be fixed upon their characters. I confeſs to thee, I am rather willing to ſuſpend my

ſentiments, till the common accidents of time, and ſuggeſtions of prudence have enabled us to ſee further into this dark and intricate affair. It is hard to imagine a wretch, who died in torments, would lay the charge of ſuch bloody purpoſes to other than his real accomplices; and I think the honour of a ſatrap is a point ſo tender, that it ought to be free not only from the imputation, but even the remoteſt ſuſpicion of guilt. I took the liberty to urge this once at a meeting of the miniſters, when I perceived many lords were of a different opinion. For my own part, I have made the moſt accurate enquiries over the province of Media by means of ſeveral expert emiſſaries, whom I ſent thither; nor do I find among the inhabitants the leaſt inclination to revolt. What confirms me in it, is, that the king has not long ſince received a very loyal and dutiful addreſs from the people of that country, preſented to him by the hands of their principal nobles, in which they expreſs their ſenſe of his paternal care for the welfare of the Perſian empire; and congratulate him on the diſcovery of the execrable treacheries of SACAS, beſeeching OROMASDES to ſpread his guardian wing over the mighty ARTAXERXES, the peculiar favourite of heaven, and the favourite of every nation, whom the radiant MITHRAS ſurveys in his diurnal courſe. A few days ago I had intelligence, that OXYATHRES is retired into Scythia. I am afraid, he is far engaged in the eunuch's conſpiracy, and is fled from a conſcience of his criminal tranſactions. ARTÆUS inſinuated to me, when advice arrived of his departure, that it was probable, as that lord was

deſcended from PHRAORTES, he might be the perſon deſigned in the paſſage tranſcribed by thee from one of SACAS's letters to PERICLES.

CRATIPPUS has orders to ſet out for Lacedemon as ſoon as the campaign is over in Greece. I have given him particular inſtructions to examine in the beſt manner that he can, what information the people of that city receive from their new envoy reſiding at this court, NICANDER. The conferences, which paſs between him and me, are whimſical enough; for while I am endeavouring to find out what lengths his commiſſion will ſuffer him to go with us, and what is the meaning of his embaſſy, he is ſtudious to anſwer me in ſuch a way, as that after the converſation is over, the reſult of it ſhall amount to nothing. Thou knoweſt, I am obliged by my office to recollect the ſubſtance of all interviews with foreign miniſters, in order to deliver them in a ſpeech at the council-table; and to be plain with you, this NICANDER ſcarce gives me matter for a ſpeech. In that caſe I can only tell the ſatraps of the cabinet, how much I attempted to ſay, and how little he was pleaſed to reply; ſo that the moſt conſiderable part in the dialogue falls wholly to my ſhare.

The laſt time I talked with him, I exerted myſelf greatly before him, and drew him out by the mere violence of words into ſome warmth. As he is of a turn ſomewhat ſingular, I fancy thou wilt be entertained with a few traits of his manner in converſing. He acquainted me, "that he is commanded by the "Spartans to require a fleet of 100 ſail with 20,000

" land forces from our monarch; in return for which " extraordinary aſſiſtance, they offer their friendſhip, " and a promiſe to aid us with troops againſt any re- " bellion in Ægypt, or commotion in the provinces." I told him, " that my royal maſter expects from the " republic of Sparta terms of a more important nature, " if he vouchſafes to enter into a league with them: " that NICANDER could not but be ſenſible, there " are two articles in the treaty, called CIMON's peace, " which the Perſians are deſirous to ſee annulled: and " therefore we muſt inſiſt, that the Lacedemonians " ſhall never be reconciled to Athens, unleſs we are " allowed free navigation on the Greecian ſeas, and " our monarch be put in full poſſeſſion of the colo- " nies in Aſia." He anſwered, " As the Athenians " were framers of that treaty, he thought they were " reſponſible for the articles in it; and hoped ſo un- " ſeaſonable a demand would not be a means of ob- " ſtructing the alliance, which he offered between " ARTAXERXES and his native city:" adding, " that the empire of Perſia was like an unwieldy body, " full of humours, which, whenever it ſickned, might " poſſibly want relief from the influence of Lacede- " mon." I again repeated what I ſaid, and he determined to ſend a courier for freſh inſtructions immediately to Sparta. I then aſked him the reaſon, " Why the Peloponneſians, and particularly his own " countrymen, who boaſt of their great armies and " extenſive power, have as yet contented themſelves " in the management of their campaigns in Greece, " with only ravaging the barren ſoil of Attica? It

" ſeems

" ſeems to me, (continued I) as if you made the bu-
" ſineſs of war nothing more than mock-ſkirmiſh
" and amuſement." " With us, (anſwered he) war
" is reſt from our labours at home." " But (ſaid I)
" how comes it, wiſdom has ſo damped your valour,
" as that you will not dare to march up to the walls
" of Athens? Methinks if I know the Spartans, they
" would willingly exerciſe their courage in reality.
" Can ſuch a people as this pretend to cope with the
" numerous nations of the Eaſt? " Yes (replied he)
" Thermopylæ can prove it." " And what did
" Thermopylæ prove, (returned I) but the temeri-
" ty of your leader? However to be ſerious with you,
" I believe you may have ſome political reaſons for not
" hazarding an attack upon Athens. You will for-
" give me therefore, if I have purſued my raillery too
" far, and I withdraw my objection, with reſpect to
" the conduct of your fellow-citizens." " How?
" (anſwered NICANDER with ſome eagerneſs) but
" if the objection does not withdraw itſelf, I am in
" no wiſe deſirous to be ſo far obliged to you: excuſe
" me, if I am beholden to no one, for the withdraw-
" ing of an objection, when I am endeavouring to
" maintain an argument, which may be ſupported by
" reaſon." I ſmiled at his impatience, and he in-
formed me afterwards, that Athens itſelf was a ſtrong
place, and in diſtreſſing her allies and tributary towns,
ſhe was ſufficiently weakened by the Peloponneſian
army. We then turned the converſation to ſome
other topics, which indeed brought him again into
good humour, but whereon he ſpoke with a diſagree-

able brevity and reſerve. Upon the whole, CLEANDER, I foreſee we ſhall make no advantage of theſe embaſſies from the ſtiff republic of Lacedemon. Wouldſt thou know my opinion of the Spartans? 'Tis this; they are a proud and ſevere people. Let them thank LYCURGUS, who has made them ſo! Unlike the reſt of the admired ſages, who have given ſalutary laws to the world, inſtead of enlarging the minds of an ignorant race, he has more effectually contracted them. Inſtead of teaching them a little condeſcenſion to others, they have learnt only to ſet a value upon themſelves. Inſtead of poliſhing them into an eaſe and benevolence of temper, he has reformed them out of it. And for the ſake of avoiding the refinements of luxury, he has introduced a neglect of that humanity in the leſſer offices of life, which adds ſuch a reliſh to the enjoyment of it.

C.

LETTER LXXV.

ORSAMES to CLEANDER. From Heliopolis.

IN a former letter * from Thebes, CLEANDER, I took notice to thee of the extravagant veneration paid by the Ægyptians to ſeveral of their home-bred animals, which muſt appear at firſt ſight exceedingly abſurd and ridiculous. It was my opinion, that the application of them in their hieroglyphic imagery to expreſs the nature and attributes of their gods, had

* Letter XXXII.

acquired

acquired to them this extraordinary degree of ſacredneſs; and to palliate this ſuperſtition the prieſts inſinuate, that the worſhip aſcribed to animals is purely relative, and ultimately directed to the divinities, of whom they are the ſymbols. Now as many of their gods were probably men deified, I am led to think, that there is a reference in theſe ſymbols, as well to the qualities, actions, and remarkable endowments of thoſe illuſtrious perſons, as to the nature and qualities of thoſe ſidereal divinities, under which they were afterwards worſhiped. A black ox for example, the animal ſacred to the ſun, is the ſymbol of OSIRIS, becauſe OSIRIS, ſay the prieſts, is the ſun, and the moon ISIS: but as thoſe deities during their reign in Ægypt were the firſt who introduced agriculture, ſo on that account likewiſe the ox and cow might become their ſymbols. And for this cauſe, they tell you, the ſoul of OSIRIS after his death retired into that animal, and choſe to dwell there rather than any where elſe, becauſe the ox was the ſymbol of agriculture. Hence the ox Mnevis or Menes, which is conſecrated to the ſun, came to be held in ſuch veneration, and worſhiped here for a god, as the apis is at Memphis. And this reminds me of another reaſon alledged for the worſhip of the ſacred animals, though indeed a very fabulous one, taken from the mythological hiſtory of Ægypt; that the gods having been once purſued by TYPHON, concealed themſelves under the figures of different animals, which may perhaps mean no more, than that the celeſtial gods come down ſometimes to dwell in thoſe ſymbols, which repreſent them. And without ſome ſuch in-

terpretation their mythology concerning OSIRIS is ſtrangely confuſed and inexplicable, which makes him to be the ſun, and ſuppoſes, that while his ſoul informs the body of an ox, it ſtill reſides in that luminary. Near akin to this is their doctrine of tranſmigration, which may be another cauſe of their paying regard to animals. For the Ægyptians ſay, they were the firſt, who maintained, that the ſoul of man was immortal, and that after death it paſſed ſucceſſively into the bodies of animals, terreſtrial, aquatic, and aerial; whence it returns to animate the body of a man, and finiſhes this circuit in three thouſand years. There is through the different parts of Ægypt ſo great diverſity in their modes of worſhip, that upon a ſlight examination one might be induced to think they differed entirely about their deities; and that there was no one general ſcheme of religion, in which they all agreed. And indeed their mythology, whatever it be in itſelf, ſeems very perplext and intricate to one, who is left to collect it from external ceremonies, popular cuſtoms, and the dark hints, which their prieſts, like oracles, at times deliver with great reſerve and myſteriouſneſs. Yet I am of opinion, they do not ſo much diſſent with regard to the deities themſelves, as to the ſymbols, under which they would repreſent their natures and attributes. For firſt I am certain, that ISIS and OSIRIS are every where adored, though they are differently repreſented, and the modes of their worſhip vary in different places. Neither do I think it improbable, but that the goat at Mendes receives divine honours on the ſame account, that the ox does here and at Memphis. When the

Mendeſian

Mendeſian goat is dead, there is the ſame mourning throughout the whole nome, as they obſerve upon the drowning of their ſacred ox at Memphis. The Mnevis, Apis, and Mendeſian goat are held more ſacred than all the other animals of Ægypt, as if they had the influence of the god more immediately reſiding in them. The former two the prieſts expreſly declare to have in them the ſoul of OSIRIS, as they pretend the latter to be the god PAN. But as there are two oxen equally ſacred in their reſpective places, it ſeems difficult to underſtand, how the ſoul of OSIRIS ſhould have paſſed into both at once. But this I take to have been the caſe; when they deified their hero MENES, who is called OSIRIS, they conſecrated him into a ſidereal divinity, implying either, that his ſpirit paſſed into the ſun, or that the ſoul of that luminary had reſided in OSIRIS. The great lights of heaven were doubtleſs the moſt obvious of all viſible objects to fill the minds of men with a religious reverence. And by thus grafting the worſhip of their deified heroes upon the mythology of the celeſtial bodies, they found the likelieſt method to divert the attention of ſuch as were their neareſt contemporaries from all thoſe circumſtances in their lives, by which they might remember thoſe gods to have been men like themſelves. But in order to ſecure a more particular reſpect in ſucceeding ages to the perſon himſelf, who was conſecrated as a god, and leſt the honour intended him might be ſwallowed up in the worſhip of an original deity, I ſuppoſe thoſe rites and myſteries were invented, which bear a particular alluſion to the great events of his life, or

that

that remarkable cataſtrophe, which put an end to it. And being received into the number of the gods, it was neceſſary he ſhould be remembered by the particular relation he bore to Ægypt. Thus I ſuppoſe the hierophants introduced the worſhip of the ſacred ox as the god OSIRIS, led to it by the hieroglyphic imagery and their doctrine of tranſmigration; and tempered their impoſture to the genius of the vulgar, who are moſt taken with the groſſeſt repreſentations. OSIRIS having reigned over all Ægypt, and after his death being remembered as a tutelar deity, in which the whole country had an equal intereſt, it is not to be wondered, if upon the diviſion of the kingdoms the chief city both of the upper and lower Ægypt ſhould claim his preſence among them. And it being an eſtabliſhed opinion, that without the living image of their god the worſhip of it could not be rightly ſolemnized, they both, while divided in their intereſts, forming alſo a ſchiſm in their religion, fought out for themſelves their own ſacred ox; and ſo the ſoul of OSIRIS has ever ſince continued to inform two different animals, though the prieſts of the two cities are ſince become more united in their intereſts. But the vulgar blinded with ſuperſtition examine not into theſe things; and the prieſts treat this matter with their uſual ſophiſtry and colluſion; though when hardly preſſed by men of reaſon and enquiry, they ſeem rather to maintain, that the god OSIRIS manifeſts himſelf in the ſacred ox, than that the ſacred ox is itſelf the god OSIRIS.

This

This worſhip of OSIRIS I may call the popular religion of Ægypt. What more recondite doctrines are concealed under the myſteries of ISIS, I am not concerned in the preſent ſubject to enquire. Neither will I enter into a perplext detail of their original deities, who are ſaid to have reigned in Ægypt. For the reign of thoſe deities I take to mean the mundane revolution, which I ſpoke of in a former letter *; and 'tis remarkable that the time which they aſcribe to the reign of all their gods, amounts exactly to the ſame period of 36,525 years. The reign therefore of the gods I conceive to imply, that the ſun, moon, and ſtars run their courſes thouſands of years before man was upon the earth. The names of thoſe deities they confound with their demi-gods and heroes. I have been ſometimes of opinion, that by VULCAN they mean an eternal deity, for they commonly ſpeak of his reign as unlimited; but his worſhip is not univerſal throughout Ægypt. Their theology in ſhort (as I have hinted elſewhere) may be reſolved into a ſyſtem of the world, and their ISIS and OSIRIS, though generally taken for the ſun and moon, which are ſuppoſed to contribute to the generation of all things, have moreover been acknowledged as deities through every part of nature, and conſecrated over and over into different ſtars and elements, as new diſcoveries came to be made in the heavens or any where elſe through the ſyſtem of nature. About the ſame time that the five intercalary days were added to their year, 'tis

* Letter XXV.

likely

likely that the Ægyptian aſtronomers had obſerved the appearance of five new ſtars in their horizon, which their predeceſſors had taken no notice of. And upon this occaſion they conſecrated their ISIS anew, with others of their deities, and ſuppoſed her to riſe in the dog-ſtar. ORUS the ſon of ISIS and OSIRIS is generally made the laſt of the gods, who reigned in Ægypt. Now OSIRIS is undeniably the firſt of their kings, whom any of their hiſtories reach up to. And their other gods, if they are to be referred to real beings, beſides the ſeveral operations and powers of nature, there is good reaſon to think, were OSIRIS's immediate progenitors or contemporaries. Such in general, CLEANDER, are the conjectures I have been able to form upon the Ægyptian mythology. Thou wilt conſider it as a ſubject, which a very ſubtile body of men have made it their ſtudy to perplex and render intricate. By the figure of a Sphinx in the avenues of their temples, they ſeem deſignedly to imply, that the doctine of their gods is obſcure and ænigmatical. Adieu.

L.

LETTER LXXVI.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. From Athens.

THOU wilt not be ſurprized, that my correſpondence with Perſia hath been interrupted ſince my departure from Olympia, when I tell thee the occaſion of it. The morning after my arrival at Athens, a decree paſt the aſſembly of the people, that in the preſent

preſent exigence of affairs all the citizens, except the ſecond order called Hippeis (who only ſerve on horſe-back) as well as the ſtrangers reſiding at Athens, ſhould repair without delay on board the fleet. Though I had ſcarce recovered the fatigue of the journey, and was ſenſible, that the accidents of the ſea, and the uncertainty of finding a conveyance for my letters would be a hindrance to the duties of my employment for ſome months; yet I conſidered at the ſame time, that an unwillingneſs to go would either raiſe a ſuſpicion of my real character, or betray a coolneſs in my affection to the ſtate. Within a few days I prepared my military equipage, and complied with a very obliging offer of PHILOCLES to ſerve as a volunteer on board the quadrireme, which he commanded. When the fleet conſiſting of a hundred gallies, of which PHORMIO was admiral, had received ſailing orders, and the wind ſat fair to carry them out of Piræeus, almoſt the whole city aſſembled on the ſhore, to ſee the ceremonies practiſed on ſuch occaſions, and take the laſt leave of their friends and relations, who were repairing to their reſpective ſhips. Firſt ſilence was proclaimed by ſound of trumpet; the public herald repeated a ſolemn form of words, which contained vows to the gods for the ſucceſs of the Athenian arms. When that was ended, the admiral and trierarchs of the fleet appeared on deck; and after they had poured a libation to NEPTUNE, drank in golden cups to the fortune of the voyage. Whilſt a Pæan was ſinging, the whole fleet ranged themſelves in line of battle, ſtruck their oars, and made the beſt of their way out of their harbour, amidſt the

the acclamations of that vaſt concourſe of ſpectators. We proceeded for the coaſt of Peloponneſus, and after waiting in vain for the enemy's fleet to come out, made deſcents in ſeveral parts, and ravaged the country. We were informed by ſome priſoners, that the allies had drawn together a ſmall body of troops at Corinth, being much diſappointed by the uneaſineſs, which ſeveral of their cities expreſſed at the continuance of the war, and diſpirited by the extraordinary armament, which the Athenians had fitted out in ſo ſhort a time. As an attempt to demoliſh the Corinthian fleet in port was looked upon as too hazardous; we contented ourſelves in ſhewing the ſuperiority of our ſtrength in the eyes of all Greece; and on hearing the allies were retired into winter-quarters, received orders to return. The expences of this year's campaign, though it has been unactive, have proved very burdenſom to the Athenians. Beſides the fleet, which cruiſed about Peloponneſus, they had another of the ſame force to guard their own coaſts; and have lately ſent a reinforement of 50 ſhips to CLIPPIDES, under the command of PACHES, with a ſupply of 200 talents. They are in great hopes, that Mitylene will be obliged to ſurrender before the beginning of next ſummer, as it is now blocked up both by land and ſea.

The reſolute and brave action of 220 Plateans is at preſent the general ſubject of converſation here. The ſcarcity of proviſion within the town, and the difficulty of throwing in relief from without, inſpired a party of the garriſon with the bold deſign of eſcaping

ing through the lines. They began with computing the height of the wall of circumvallation by exactly reckoning the number of the rows of bricks, that compoſed it. They next took the advantage of a dark tempeſtuous night, and ſallied out of the town under the guidance of THEÆNETUS an augur and EUPOLPIDAS an officer, marching at ſome diſtance from each other to prevent the claſhing of their armour. They applied the ladders to the intervals between the towers, two of which were immediately ſeized, and the centinels killed. A looſe tile, that fell from the wall, gave an alarm to the Peloponneſian camp; but as the beſieged made a feint ſally on the other ſide, and the darkneſs of the night and the ſtorm, which beat full in their faces, helped to encreaſe the confuſion, they durſt not leave their poſts. In the mean time the ſelect number, that had made themſelves maſters of the towers, ſecured the paſſage for the reſt of their company, who, when they had mounted the firſt wall, changed the ladders, and came down on the other ſide, where they drew themſelves up to defend the detachment, that were preparing to quit the towers. Whilſt theſe laſt were deſcending, a body of reſerve belonging to the beſiegers came up with lights, and the whole Platean party had juſt time to make their eſcape. They retired by the way, that lies towards Thebes, in order to deceive the Peloponneſians, who ſent out detachments in purſuit of them on the road leading to Athens. When they were returned to the camp, the Plateans changed their courſe, and arrived ſafely here. I have procured from one of them a plan

of

of the fortifications of the city, and the works of the beſiegers, which I ſend encloſed in this packet, together with a journal of the expedition to the coaſts of Peloponneſus drawn up by PHILOCLES.

The advantages, which the Athenians have received from a war now advanced to the concluſion of its fourth year, are ſo trifling in compariſon of the ambitious projects, which they formed to themſelves at the beginning of it, and the inſupportable burden of their annual expences, that ſeveral of the moſt intelligent and diſintereſted citizens begin to think ſeriouſly of propoſing terms for an honourable accommodation. But the party, that deſire the continuance of the quarrel, have a great influence over the minds of the ignorant multitude, and flatter them with hopes of aſſiſtance from ſeveral foreign princes, as PERDICCAS king of Macedon, SITALCES, and our potent monarch. The head of this faction, CLEON, has lately received a diſgrace, under which nothing but his matchleſs aſſurance could ſupport him. He had taken a bribe of five talents from ſome tributary iſlands, to obtain for them a diminution of the taxes, which they pay to this ſtate. The bargain by ſome means or another got air, and the Hippeis (or knights) brought a charge of corruption againſt him in the name of their order, before the Areopagus. The accuſation was clearly made out, and he was obliged to refund the talents. LAMACHUS a young man is lately elected one of the ten generals by CLEON's intereſt, who carried his point in ſo high a manner, that it gave ſingular offence. The oppoſite party have engaged ARISTOPHANES the comic poet,

poet, to write a play, which is intended to prepare the minds of the people for overtures of peace, by ſetting forth the detriment, that the war occaſions to the common intereſt of Greece, the miſeries it has brought upon Athens, and the views of their orators and generals, who deſire to prolong it. Neither the memory of PERICLES, nor the characters of the preſent adminiſtration will be ſpared in the piece, which is to be performed at the next feaſts of BACCHUS.

I cannot pretend to determine, whether the repreſentation of this comedy will have that effect upon the minds of the people, which ſome expect from it. It has been long obſerved of the Athenians, that though they ſee even with pleaſure their greateſt miniſters accuſed upon the ſtage of the groſſeſt enormities, and vilified with the ſevereſt ſatyr, and permit the fables of their deities to be expoſed with all the licentiouſneſs of a ſcurrilous buffoon wit; yet neither is the management of their affairs taken from the former, nor a grain of incenſe leſs offered upon the altars of the latter. Farewel.

P.

LETTER LXXVII.

CRATIPPUS to CLEANDER.

THERE is no part of my inſtructions, that I obey with ſo much private ſatisfaction, as that relating to my correſpondence with thee. From hence I not only foreſee the greateſt advantage to our maſter's

ſervice, but I promiſe myſelf the moſt valuable improvements from the communication of thy ſagacity and experience, and perhaps, ſhould I be found not unworthy, a friendſhip, which will be the honour of my future life.

When the council of the Great King, obſerving the new light, that was thrown upon the affairs of Greece by every diſpatch of thine from Athens, had determined to place an agent alſo at Sparta, my patron GOBRYAS caſt his eyes upon me for that employment. He conſidered, that the misfortunes of my family would be a proper recommendation of me here. We fell with the ariſtocracy, and were obliged to leave Rhodes, when the popular faction prevailed, and made an alliance with Athens. My two brothers have ever ſince taken up their reſidence on the oppoſite coaſt of Caria, waiting for ſome turn of affairs in our favour. And thou knoweſt, thoſe of our principles throughout all Greece place their only hope in the ſucceſs of the Peloponneſian arms.

As ſoon as I arrived, I waited upon BRASIDAS, a young officer of reputation, and preſented to him the token from my brother THERON his hoſt. He received it very cordially, and expreſſed his ſatisfaction at this opportunity of returning the good offices done him, while the galley he commanded lay in the port of Caunus. I told him, that driven from my own country I had made the tour of Greece and Aſia, and had even ſeen the court of the Great King; but that, tired with wandering, I was determined to fix at laſt in this ſeat of ſecurity and virtue, where valour and diſcipline

diſcipline repel all dangers from without, and an uniform obedience to the beſt laws prevents the more fatal evils from within. He replied with a ſmile, that a taſte of Suſa was by no means a preparation for a Spartan diet; but that he would obtain a licence from the Proxeni for my ſtay in the city, and would propoſe me for a member to the little ſociety, where he daily eat his frugal meal. I thanked him, and added, that I might perhaps not be altogether unworthy ſome favour from the ſtate, as I was thoroughly informed of the condition of the Rhodian marine, a point my countrymen were ſo jealous of, and which might be a diſcovery of conſequence in the preſent war.

The whole city is at preſent taken up with the funeral of ARCHIDAMUS. It is indeed a moſt ſolemn ceremony; as if this people intended by ſo much reſpect paid to their dead princes, to make amends for the ſmall ſhare of regal pomp and authority they allow them when living. His character thou art no ſtranger to. He was the hoſt of thy friend PERICLES. Theſe two great men were ſuſpected and traduced for meaſures, which the event proved to be wiſe and honeſt; and they moſt effectually diſtreſſed each other by thoſe very counſels, which were branded with the name of colluſion and treachery. Yet ſtill the memory of ARCHIDAMUS is purſued with reproaches; and a prudent and glorious adminiſtration of more than forty years cannot make amends for his unwillingneſs to enter ſuddenly into a deſperate war, and his forbearing a while to puſh the enemy in ſuch a manner, as would render all terms of accommodation impoſſible. This

furious ſpirit is kept up in the republic by the Ephore STHENELAIDAS, he, whoſe violent oration prevailed over all the king's reaſons, and hurried the aſſembly into a vote, that the treaties were broken on the part of Athens.

From the imperfect ſurvey of things I have yet been able to take, I muſt not pretend to determine the queſtion about this war, how far Sparta was intereſted in the quarrel of her Corinthian allies; or what credit ſhe might give to the Athenians offer of ſatisfaction. But this I am convinced of, it will ever be my duty to add fuel to this flame, and to attach myſelf to the party, which declares againſt all overtures of peace. While their diſputes continue (which we ſhould wiſh for in the firſt place) the general force of Greece is daily growing weaker. And ſhould even one of the powers prevail, and put an end to the war by the ruin of its rival, that very ſucceſs would turn the thoughts of the conqueror upon tyrannizing over Europe; nor would he quit that near and tempting proſpect for the diſtant view of empty glory in the fields of Aſia. Adieu.

W.

From Sparta.

LETTER LXXVIII.

CLEANDER to ORSAMES.

SINCE I read over the writings of the Grecian poets, noble friend, I have often thought it might be a very improving as well as pleaſing ſpeculation, to inquire into the cauſe and origin of fables in the world;

world; how the powers of nature and the human paſſions were firſt allegorized; and in what manner the plain facts of ancient hiſtory came to be mixed with the ornaments of a poetic imagination. After having made ſome ſearch into the ſubject, at leaſt ſo far as might enable me to converſe upon it, I went one day into the Lyceum, and fell accidentally into diſcourſe with CTESIPHON a learned ſophiſt. He told me, he ſhould be very proud to inſtruct an inquiſitive ſtranger in a point, which he himſelf had ſo throughly conſidered: but I muſt intreat you, ſaid he, not to diſcover to any one thoſe ſentiments, which I ſhall lay before you, leſt ſome malicious perſon ſhould accuſe me of ſpeaking againſt the gods of my country, and cite me to appear before the court of Areopagus. I aſſured him of my inviolable ſecrecy, and then he entered on the matter without further apology. You know, ſaid he, that the eaſtern parts of the world are thought to have been much ſooner peopled than the climates of the Weſt. The Greeks therefore lived for many years in a ſtate of ignorance and rudeneſs, while other regions enjoyed the ornaments as well as the conveniencies of life. Their diet was of the wild herbs of the field; their clothing of leaves; and the caverns, which were formed by the hand of nature in uncultivated mountains, were their places of habitation. The coloners, who mixed with them from Ægypt and Phœnicia, endeavoured to temper the ſavageneſs of the nation; and by communicating their cuſtoms to them, inſenſibly formed them to the politer arts of humanity. They taught them to ſtrip the

wool from the ſkins of animals, and to cure it for uſe. The knowledge of building and agriculture, when firſt revealed to them, was eſteemed of ſo excellent and neceſſary a nature, that the gratitude, which they owed to their benefactors, very naturally broke out into expreſſions of adoration. They regarded them as ſent from heaven for the benefit of mortals, and adopted them after death among their deities. Hence aroſe the gods of the Greeks; and their ORPHEUS, APOLLO, and HERMES (who is the ſame with the THOTH or MERCURY of Egypt) take their riſe from the laws and manners, which they gave to a barbarous and rough race. And to ſay the truth, CLEANDER, ſuch improvements as theſe might well demand the admiration of mankind in the dawnings of ſcience, which are the principal ſupports of health and ſocial felicity in more illuminated ages. Your account is certainly a very fair one, anſwered I, and what I ſhall readily acquieſce in. But methinks the craft of theſe wiſe men concurred with the ignorance of theſe ſavages in the advancement of fable. For the firſt lawgivers and reformers of mankind, the better to claim reſpect from their countrymen and kindred, were ambitious to be thought deſcended from the gods, and to have had frequent interviews with them of ſingular importance. Yes, replied he, a divine miſſion ſtrikes immediately with awe, and inclines us to implicit reverence and belief. The prieſts too were careful to contend with one another in raiſing altars to the memory of a new hero, and vamping up religious ceremonies to be performed in his honour. They buſied themſelves in writing

writing whole volumes of fables; and he, who had the beſt invention, generally bore away the approbation of the multitude to his ſhrine, as well as the gainful applauſe of the more wealthy. Beſides, before the uſe of letters and writing came amongſt us, the remembrance of great and illuſtrious actions depended only on a ſort of family or national tradition. Sometimes indeed they raiſed a monument with an uncouth repreſentation engraven on it of the thing, which gave occaſion to the erecting it; and perhaps now and then an irregular ſong was tuned to the praiſes of a celebrated conqueror. Undoubtedly, returned I, tradition is a fatal enemy to truth. One may ſuppoſe, for inſtance, that in order to imprint a ſtory more effectually on the minds of children and ſtrangers, a man zealous for the reputation of his anceſtors might frequently intermix the marvellous with the probable; and when he was warmed by diſcourſe, might indulge himſelf in ſome flights of fancy, which he little thought contagious enough to infect the hiſtories of after-times. Yet ſo it has proved, ſaid the ſophiſt; conſider only the lying relations of travellers, and you will ſoon be brought to aſſert what you ſuppoſe. The fictions of theſe have paſſed, like the family traditions you ſpeak of, for truth, and are adopted into our accounts of the early ages. At preſent indeed we are aware of ſuch counterfeits; and though we hear out their tales with patience, we diſdain to receive them with credulity. No man of ſenſe converſes now a-days with one, who has been a tedious voyage, without making ſome grains of allowance for the embelliſhments, which ſuch perſons

are too apt to give to their narration. To be ſerious, it is very difficult for one, who is ſure of not being contradicted, to reſiſt a ſtrong inclination to tell wonders. Did not a traveller come back full fraught with extraordinary curioſities, his friends would laugh at him for pretending to have made the tour of foreign countries; and he would appear at once uninformed and ridiculous. Senſible therefore, that he is permitted to enlarge and improve as he pleaſes, he thinks it becomes him to relate one ſtory after another in ſuch a manner, as each ſhall amaze you, without giving you a moment's pauſe to queſtion him upon any. Should we commend the imagination of a poet or a painter, if they made no uſe of that general licenſe, which is granted them, of inventing what they pleaſe, and adorning thoſe inventions with all the lively images of fancy? It is their office, you know, rather to amuſe than inſtruct; and not content with forgiveneſs for endeavouring to deceive us, they demand applauſe for deceiving ingeniouſly. In this reſpect, CTESIPHON, (interrupted I) you are in the right to be candid to the poets: but methinks no excuſe is ſufficient for the travellers. They have received indeed, as you intimate, a kind of licenſe for lying; but it is a privilege more allowed them from courteſy and preſcription, than from the motives of reaſon and good ſenſe. In my opinion, no quarter ſhould be given to thoſe, who by forging ſtrange things of the nations they have paſſed through, miſrepreſent one half of mankind to the other; and inſtead of eradicating the popular ſelfiſhneſs and little prejudices of their country-men,

ſerve

ſerve only to confirm and encreaſe them. Such as theſe may be ſaid to ſow the ſeeds of diviſion among the inhabitants of the earth, and to baniſh the great principle of univerſal benevolence from the world. Let us return to the poets. To relate a fact with ſimplicity is not ſo peculiarly their province, as to relate it with ornament. The poetic diction muſt neceſſarily be raiſed to diſtinguiſh it from the calmneſs of proſe writings. A certain ſpirit of enthuſiaſm ought to diffuſe a complexion of ſupernatural inſpiration over their compoſitions, which would appear frantic in a plain commentary or annal. With them every ſhepherdeſs is a nymph or NAIAD; every huntreſs a DIANA; every beauty a VENUS. True, (anſwered he) and the language of poetry would be nothing without it. How could we reliſh the Iliad or Odyſſey of our admired HOMER, without the divine machinery introduced there, and the mixture of thoſe intereſting fables, which he has wove into his poems? Do you not think the invaſion of Greece by XERXES, when he ſwept acroſs the globe with millions in his train, a more wonderful ſtory in every part of it, than the war of Troy would appear to us, when ſtript of its poetical apparel? In a word, the impatient ſon of PELEUS is obliged to HOMER for his immortality; and the fame of that ancient ſiege is more owing to the warm imagination of the poet, than to any hiſtorical accounts, that have been tranſmitted to us of it. None of theſe repreſent it in half ſo conſiderable a light. An hiſtorian would tell us ſimply, that HECTOR was a brave man: the poet informs us, he has MARS

for

for his companion. Is ULYSSES ſhipwrecked? It is ſaid, that NEPTUNE is angry with him; and the wiſdom of the ſame hero is attributed to the inſpiration of MINERVA. Thus the Greeks, in imitation of the Phœnicians and Egyptians, have filled their hiſtory with mythology. The ground of the fable is real, while the ornaments are feigned; and the truth of antiquity is deformed by the ignorance of the people, the artifice of the prieſts, and the genius of the poets. Painters and ſculptors have contributed not a little to ſupport the credit of fabulous ſtories; and a Satyr, or a Fawn, a Syren, or a Centaur is often indebted for its ſpurious exiſtence to an elegant ſtatue or a fine painting. And here, added I, let us not forget the theatres of Athens. They are founded upon fiction, and ſubſiſt by the reception, which it meets with. The poet feigns converſations and actions in the dramatic way. His plot is taken from ſome fable. It is ſet as it were in motion before our eyes; and if the repreſentation is performed with plauſibility, we almoſt begin to think the tale not impoſſible in reality. Beyond diſpute (continued he) the ſtage may be called the kingdom of mythology. It reigns there protected by the ſuperſtition of the people, and is encouraged by all the arts of national profuſion. But there has not been a more plentiful ſource of fable, than the ignorance of the firſt ages in philoſophy. From thence ariſe many of their aſtronomical fables and fanciful repreſentations of the powers of nature; for curioſity leads men to enquire into the cauſes of extraordinary effects; and if the true explications are wanting,

imaginary

imaginary ones take their place. Each river and fountain is ſuppoſed to have a guardian deity; ÆOLUS is made ruler of the winds; IRIS or the rainbow is appointed meſſenger to the gods; the ſun and moon are worſhiped under the names of APOLLO and CYNTHIA, and eclipſes are ſaid to be owing to the loves of ENDYMION and DIANA. Thus, ſaid he, there is nothing ſo abſurd but the creating power of a poet can command it. But ſurely one may account for their allegorizing all phyſical events from the natural temper of mankind. Theſe events of themſelves being extraordinary, are a good foundation for a poetical fancy to work upon; and we are more pleaſed with a fable, that conveys a ſignificant meaning, than with one, which engages our admiration, without ſatisfying the underſtanding. In this manner the poets chooſe to blend utility with entertainment, to amuſe us with ſuch ſtories, as are raiſed upon inſtructive truths. And I believe we may conſider it as a general clue to all the intricacies of mythology, that moſt of its fables are built, either on the actions of hiſtory, or the operations of nature; on the principles of civil policy, or the maxims of morality.

Our ſophiſt was now interrupted by ſome other pupil; but as I went away from him, he told me, he would be glad of my company once more in the Lyceum, for that the ſubject of fables was by no means exhauſted.

C.

From Athens.

LETTER

LETTER LXXIX.

CLEANDER to ORSAMES.

A Few days after my former viſit to the Lyceum I returned thither, and at a diſtance ſaw CTESIPHON engaged in earneſt converſation with one of his followers. As ſoon as he perceived me, he left his diſciple, and ran up to meet me. I have juſt been inſtructing a young man, ſaid he, in the beneficent nature of the gods and the firſt principles of juſtice. I found his mind corrupted with every popular prejudice, and unhappily immerſed in all the wild extravagancies of fable. He was pleaſed, that his follies were patronized in the character of ſome ancient hero, and vindicated his own vices from the example of JUPITER. It is really incredible to obſerve, what early havock ſuperſtition makes in the government and oeconomy of human nature; and perhaps it might admit of ſome diſpute, whether the diſbelief of a providence, or the abſurd romances of ſuperſtition have been moſt fatal to mankind. If the one diſowns the exiſtence of ſuperior beings, the other confeſſes ſo many fooliſh and arbitrary tyrants: if the former gives a looſe to the paſſions, the latter debaſes and enſlaves the reaſon. Every day's experience convinces me of this truth; and I can no longer wonder at the ignorance and groſs credulity of the firſt ages, when I meet with ſuch unaccountable inſtances of both in the days of knowledge and improvement. But let us apply more cloſely to our ſubject.

The

The laſt thing we took notice of the other day was, that the poets for the moſt part founded their fables, not only on ſome fact in hiſtory, or phænomenon in nature, but on the ſentiments of civil policy and the maxims of morality. For my own part, I am ſo thoroughly perſuaded of this, continued CTESIPHON, that the notion can never be wreſted from my mind by any plauſibility of wit, or force of reaſon. When we are told, that, after the expulſion of the giants from heaven, fame ſprang from the earth as their youngeſt ſiſter, can we apply it to any thing but to the ſeditious murmurs, which uſually ſucceed an inſurrection? Or from the ſtory of CASSANDRA do we not immediately collect the fruitleſſneſs of untimely counſels? As ſhe diſdained to ſubmit herſelf to the deſires of APOLLO, the god of harmony, in like manner ſuch adviſers, too proud of their own wiſdom and dexterity, diſregard the occaſions to ſpeak and to be ſilent, the difference between vulgar and judicious ears, and the grace and gravity of diſcourſe. Thus let their judgments be ever ſo profound, they fail of their purpoſe; and rather accelerate than prevent the ruin of their friends. The thought, anſwered I, is ingenious; I may add, perhaps, refined: and to be plain with you, one cannot but obſerve, that if the prieſts and bards of antiquity, intended by each of their fables to convey ſome exquiſite inſtruction to the minds of their ſcholars, they took a great deal of pains to expreſs with obſcurity and in a large compaſs of words, what they might have delivered in fewer terms with more eaſe and perſpicuity. Beſides, you ſcarce allow,

that they ever invented a fable merely for the ſake of giving play to the imagination. And ſo according to your thoughts of the matter, we muſt ſuppoſe the neceſſitous and wandring Ἀοιδοὶ of antiquity entruſted with all the arcana of religion, acquainted with the arts of princes, and to have made themſelves maſters of the ſeveral myſteries of government. The learning of the world at that time, replied CTESIPHON, lay in few hands; and the Ἀοιδοὶ, whom you ſpeak of, had certainly the largeſt ſhare of it. Their travels to the courts of petty lords (of whom there were many in thoſe days) and to the towns, which were then in higheſt repute through Greece, furniſhed them with a more conſiderable knowledge of the manners of various nations, and their opinions in religion and politics, than any other inhabitants of the country. HOMER, you know, is reported to have converſed with LYCURGUS; and they ſay, that, in forming the Spartan ſtate, the ſevere lawgiver paid a peculiar deference to the ſentiments of the fanciful poet. With reſpect to their tales, to me it ſeems more reaſonable to imagine, that theſe Ἀοιδοὶ always conceal ſome ſubject of improvement under the maſk of fable. It was the faſhion of the Egyptians to utter themſelves in parables and dark ſayings. The Greeks have derived the ſame cuſtom from their teachers; and you know it has been conſtantly looked upon as part of the wiſdom of antiquity. But the invention of romance for the ſake of romance could only be an argument of folly. As to your objection to the uſe of allegory, I can in no ſort admit it. A ſoul ſo aptly prepared for inſtruction as yours,

CLEANDER, would chooſe the neareſt way to it. But how few are there, alas! who have the ſame diſpoſition to receive it? A plain truth cannot offend you: were it moulded and ſoftened to your inclination, you would think it an affront to your underſtanding; and you have no ſooner marked out an error in your conduct, than you reform it. I beſeech you not to judge of the reſt of mankind by the temper of your own mind. Allegory is a proper and familiar way of bringing thoſe to reaſon, who cannot bear a downright reproof. It ſweetens the bitter draught of inſtruction; it carries nothing, that is auſtere or diſguſting along with it; and the impreſſion, which it leaves, though gently and gradually made, is nevertheleſs laſting. Allegory is the varniſh of truth; and while it takes away nothing from the ſtrength of it, adds a gloſs and beauty to it, agreeable to all, and inviting to many. I am convinced, ſaid I, CTESIPHON, by your argument; and the encomium, which you paſſed upon my temper in the courſe of it, is the only inſtance, where your judgment can be called in queſtion. But I intreat you to go on.

Another ſource of mythology, added CTESIPHON, has been an ignorance in languages, eſpecially the Phœnician; and this I am very well aſſured of from my own knowledge of that tongue. It is natural to imagine, that the language of the colonies, which came from Phœnicia into Greece, would mix itſelf in proceſs of time with the original language of the country; and as it abounds with equivocal words and phraſes, whenever the Greeks met with them in the Phœnician

cian hiſtories, they thought themſelves at liberty to explain them agreeably to their own humour. An example or two will ſuffice to maintain my obſervation. The word *Nahhaſeh* imports equally a keeper or a dragon. Hence the tale of the golden fleece and the garden of the Heſperides. From *Alpha* or *Ilpha*, ſignifying alike a bull or a ſhip, they framed the ſtory of EUROPA's being carried off by JUPITER tranſformed into a bull, inſtead of ſaying more conſiſtently with the accidents of common life, that ſhe was conveyed in a ſhip to Crete. By the aſſiſtances of languages one may trace the origin of thoſe Ægyptian and Phœnician fables, that have been deformed and varied by the Greeks, with a view to prove, that the riſe of all was among them, and that they received neither their deities nor great men from any other people. This ariſes from their national pride in pretending to be Αὐτόχθονες or *Aborigines* of the country.

The tale of EUROPA, which you have juſt mentioned, anſwered I, puts me in mind of another ſource of fable, ridiculous perhaps and whimſical, but not yet touched upon; I mean a regard for the reputation of ſeveral matrons and princeſſes of antiquity. As it was impoſſible their chaſtity ſhould ever be violated by human means, or the allurements of the faireſt mortals, ſome god muſt have forced them to a compliance with his wiſhes; and thus the ſoft gallantries of the lover were imputed to the arbitrary injunctions of a deity.

After all, concluded the ſophiſt, we muſt look for the chief cauſe of fable in vanity, the prevailing foible of mankind. Our anceſtors, unable to follow plain nature,

ture, abſurdly endeavoured to exceed it. For deſigning to raiſe their own characters to fame, or propoſe their own lives as the patterns for imitation, they deſcribed them with all the marvels of poetry and fancy. Strange fondneſs for fiction! that could make them aſpire to a reputation of extravagance, unjuſtly called heroiſm, and ſet themſelves for an example in ſuch actions, as are above the capacity of a man. How different is the behaviour of unaffected virtue! She diſdains the gay ornaments of fiction, and borrows no luſtre but from her own intrinſic excellence. Her views are not like thoſe of the romantically ambitious, dependent on falſe glory, and the blaſt of popular applauſe. She teaches us to recommend our actions to the eſteem and admiration of poſterity, unmixed with ſuch fantaſtic falſhoods, as may be thought juſtly an allay to their merit.

C.

LETTER LXXX.

CLEANDER to MEGABYZUS. From Athens.

THY five thouſand darics *, noble ſatrap, are ſo far from creating me a diſagreeable employment, that they give me occaſion to improve and indulge my taſte among thoſe curioſities, which thou deſiredſt me to procure, and at the ſame time are of ſervice to me in my miniſterial capacity, by introducing me to the acquaintance of many conſiderable perſons, and advancing me to a character, which the greateſt men here are fond of, that of a lover and judge of thoſe

* See Letter XXX.

elegancies. Were my fellow-labourer CRATIPPUS to undertake ſuch a commiſſion, he would at once loſe all the intereſt his ſingular addreſs has procured him in the Lacedemonian adminiſtration; nay it were well, if he did not get himſelf expelled from that little community, where he daily ſups black broth for his maſter's ſervice, and out-does the native Spartans in bitterneſs againſt the Athenian politeneſs and Aſiatic magnificence. But here whatever tends to improve or adorn life, has its ſhare of reputation. The pencil of my countryman PARRHASIUS has obtained for him the right of citizenſhip; and PHIDIAS's ſkill in ſtatuary and architecture raiſed him ſo high in the ſtate, that he was treated like a public miniſter, and impeached before the people. But thou wilt not wonder at any marks of diſtinction ſhewn to artiſts in this city after thy adventure with ZEUXIS at Epheſus, if thou recollecteſt with how ſtately an air he received thy viſit, and amidſt all the pomp and attendance of a Perſian viceroy, how freely he reproved thy falſe criticiſms on his works. To thoſe very reproofs is perhaps in ſome meaſure owing the admirable taſte thou now art maſter of; and which joined to that liberality, which equally diſtinguiſhes thee, will eſtabliſh a ſchool of elegance in the Eaſt, and convert our affectation of the coſtly and unnatural into a love of what is great and ſimple. My ſituation enables me to aſſiſt this noble deſign; and it is with the greateſt pleaſure I give thee a proof of my attention to it by the following liſt of what I have collected.

The two figures of Delian braſs are of POLYCLETUS. In one he ſhews all the ſoft beauties of a delicate youth; in the other the manly grace and the ſtrong muſcling of a body trained to arms. Thou wilt be apt in the latter to charge the ſculptor with extravagance; but the exerciſes conſtantly practiſed in Greece give a ſhape to the parts very different from that of the leſs active nations.

Moſt of the HERMÆ, thou wilt obſerve, have the ſame turn of countenance. That divine ſweetneſs is not the mere idea of the artiſt; the hint is taken from ALCIBIADES, the moſt beautiful youth in Athens. The Cupid holding a thunderbolt, which is alſo his portrait, I cannot but look upon as ſomething prophetic, as a kind of expreſſion of that reputation and authority, which his charming perſon and moſt engaging behaviour are likely one day to procure him among his citizens.

It was with difficulty I got the ſea-piece of ANDROBIUS from the family, whoſe anceſtor is the hero of it. The intrepidity and eagerneſs, which appear in the face and action of SCYLLIS, as he ſwims towards the Perſian galleys, whoſe cables he cut in the bad weather before the battle of Artemiſium, are wonderfully expreſſed. Great miniſter, let not the ſubject offend thee; we love not our country the leſs, when we admire the virtue of an enemy; and a work of art like this ſent into Aſia, whatever be the ſtory, I conſider among the ſpoils of Greece.

The victory of our troops over the Egyptian rebels is however a more agreeable piece. The painter to

ſhew it happened upon the Nile, has introduced a crocodile ſeizing an aſs upon the bank, and inriched the landſcape with a Sphinx and a Pyramid.

Every maſter, thou wilt imagine, was ambitious to ſucceed in the repreſentation of PERICLES. To help the want of proportion in his head, and yet not quite loſe ſo ſtriking a particularity, they generally covered it with an helmet. He was otherwiſe a moſt graceful figure; and CTESILAUS has done him that juſtice, that in this ſtatue every ſpectator agrees he is truly Olympian. The ruler of Athens, the arbiter of Greece, the orator, the general, the ſtateſman, all appear in his look and attitude. CTESILAUS indeed has the peculiar art of improving every charm, and adding dignity to the nobleſt ſubjects.

After ſurveying this elegant portrait, what wilt thou think of the ſame great perſon, expoſed in the ridiculous draughts of a painter in CLEON's pay, his only deformity aggravated, and every feature debaſed? Through all this thou wilt ſtill perceive a ſhocking likeneſs; and the painter ſeems as happily to have copied the abuſive deſcription of the comic poet CRATINUS, as PHIDIAS did thoſe ſublime verſes of HOMER in the deſign of his JUPITER. Such is the licence of the pencil at Athens. But it goes higher, and burleſques even their gods in the ſtory of the birth of BACCHUS, where JUPITER appears in the dreſs and poſture of a woman in labour, with the goddeſſes, like goſſips, ſtanding round him. The inlightned adorers of MITHRAS, potent Satrap, may ſafely join in the laugh at ſuch monſtrous repreſentations.

tions. To expreſs the deity under any form we know to be abſurd and impious; but at the ſame time we muſt allow, that to this ſuperſtition of the Greeks the arts of deſign owe their perfection and their very being. The rude image of ſome god was the firſt effort of ſculpture, and the moſt curious paintings adorn the walls of the temples.

The encomiums of the poets have made MYRON's cow ſo famous, that I was determined to procure it for thee. It is indeed a capital piece. The braſs, thou wilt ſee, is of a different kind from that imployed by POLYCLETUS; it comes from the forges of Ægina. Theſe two rivals vie even in the choice of their materials.

The lion ſurrounded by Cupids by the ſame hand ſtrikes me much more. Wouldſt thou think it poſſible for that nobleneſs of character, which diſtinguiſhes the gods and heroes of PHIDIAS, to be diſplayed in the brute creation? MYRON's lion will convince thee of it. The boys are deſigned with ſuch ſoftneſs, and placed ſo advantageouſly (ſome tying garlands round his neck, ſome playing with his paws, or climbing up his ſides) that no groupe, however ſuperior on account of its ſubject, has been more admired.

The Genius of Athens is the work of PARRHASIUS. By the expreſſion he has given to his figure, and the attributes, with which he accompanies it, he moſt ingeniouſly ſhews us the temper and ſtate of this people. There is an air of grandeur mixed with levity, and a fierceneſs tempered by generoſity. The owl repreſents political prudence, the caduceus eloquence, and

the trident the dominion of the ſea. In general I muſt confeſs, theſe allegorical ſubjects ſeldom pleaſe me. It is difficult to find ſymbols, that exactly repreſent the idea they are intended for; and, if they are not ſuch as are authoriſed by common uſe, they perplex and tire the ſpectator, inſtead of entertaining and informing him.

I will not interrupt the pleaſure, which I flatter myſelf thou wilt receive from this account, with buſineſs of ſtate. My public diſpatches I have addreſſed to the chief ſcribe. I would ſpeak to thee on this occaſion, not as the loweſt ſlave of ARTAXERXES to the great ſupport of his throne, but as a paſſionate lover of the arts to the generous protector of them.

W.

The end of the fourth year of the Peloponneſian war.

A. M. 3577. *2d year of the* 88*th Olymp.*

The fifth year of the Peloponneſian war.

LETTER LXXXI.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. From Athens.

I Imagine it unneceſſary to inform the Perſian council of the invaſion of Attica by the allied army under the command of CLEOMENES, guardian to PAUSANIAS the young Spartan king; and likewiſe of the

failing

ſailing of ALCIDAS with 40 ſhips from the Peloponneſian ports to the relief of Mitylene. CRATIPPUS cannot have failed to ſend the earlieſt accounts of both theſe events directly from Sparta. It falls within my province to ſend advice of the retreat of CLEOMENES, who after adding to the deſolation of the country (if any thing ſtill remained to be laid waſte in a fifth ſucceſſive inroad) kept hovering about with a flying camp ſome time in expectation of the fleet's ſucceſs, which had been ſent to Leſbos. The allies by making theſe annual incurſions ſeem to have it in view to diſtreſs the Athenians in deſtroying their crops, and obliging the inhabitants of the villages to continue pent up within the walls of Athens; and they hope, that the inconveniencies, to which thoſe unfortunate families are reduced, who have now for four years been deprived of their ancient habitations and the revenues of their eſtates, will produce at laſt ſome notable turn in their favour. The want of proviſions in Athens was ſo great for ſome days, that the poorer citizens begun a tumult, which might have proved of dangerous conſequence. They firſt pillaged two merchants warehouſes in the ſtreet of the Tripods, and next aſſembled in great numbers to plunder the markets; but DIOTIMUS the archon polemarch with a detachment of the garriſon diſperſed them, and took the ringleaders priſoners. Soon after the Sitonai and Agoranomoi (to whom the care of furniſhing the city with corn and inſpection of the markets are committed) brought in ſupplies from Eubœa and the coaſt of Aſia Minor, and the public tranquillity was entirely reſtored. The

news arrived lately from Leſbos has entirely changed the ſcene. The complaints of the miſeries and expences of war are ſucceeded by the joyful acclamations of victory, and the pleaſing ideas of revenge over their revolted tributaries. Every man entertains his friends, decks his houſe with laurel, puts on his white robe, and pays his oblations at the ſhrine of his tutelar deity. The porticos of the temples are adorned with arms, and the priſons filled with captives. Yeſterday was kept as a ſolemn feſtival, and the prytanes and archons aſſiſted at a thankſgiving-ſacrifice to JUPITER in the name of the republic. Thou wilt judge, noble ſcribe, what occaſion there is for theſe rejoicings, when I tell thee Mitylene is ſurrendered. The inhabitants reduced to great neceſſity through a ſcarcity of proviſions, and deſpairing of ſuccours from their allies, raiſed a ſudden commotion, obliged the rich to diſtribute corn to the poor, and refuſed to obey further orders from their magiſtrates towards the defence of the town. The latter ſeeing all authority loſt in the diſorders of the enraged populace, and apprehending, that the next ſtep they took would be to come to an agreement with the Athenians, from whence themſelves might be excluded, ſent out deputies of their own to PACHES, who commanded the ſiege; and that general admitted them to capitulate on theſe conditions; 1. That the city ſhould be immediately ſurrendered to the troops of the republic, and quarters provided for them during their ſtay in the iſland. 2. That the Athenians ſhould be at liberty to determine concerning the puniſhment of the Mitylenians in what manner they pleaſed. 3. That

PACHES

PACHES ſhould neither put to death, impriſon, nor encloſe any citizen of Mitylene till the pleaſure of his ſtate was known. Theſe terms were ſtrictly obſerved. PACHES has ſent back to Athens a part of his ſquadron, with a relation of the poſture of affairs in Leſbos, and SALÆTHUS an agent of Lacedemon, and the principal authors of the revolt, priſoners. Along with them likewiſe is arrived a deputation of the magiſtrates of Mitylene, who come to implore the mitigation of the puniſhment intended to be inflicted on them for their revolt. I much doubt, whether they will ſucceed in their errand. The people in general ſeem inclined by a rigorous ſentence to deter the reſt of their allies from the leaſt thought of ſhaking off their dependance. No news is yet arrived of the Peloponneſian ſhips; ſeveral are uneaſy, leſt they ſhould ſurprize the army and fleet at Mitylene, who are probably enjoying that ſecurity, which accompanies ſucceſs.

If I can collect any thing from what NICANDER has communicated to thee of the views of his ſtate in ſeeking an alliance with Perſia, it is, that they are unwilling to be reproached by the reſt of Greece with having brought in Barbarians to decide the quarrel, which makes them not very forward to ſmooth the openings to a negotiation. At the ſame time they are inclined to keep on fair terms with the Great King, that they may be able to puſh on an alliance with him more briſkly, when any remarkable ſtroke of ill fortune befalls them. I would offer it to thy conſideration, whether it would not be adviſable for the Perſian miniſtry, in return, to ſhew an abſolute averſeneſs

averſeneſs to comply with their extravagant propoſals, and diſcover ſome inclinations of joining with the Athenians. I am perſuaded, it would ſoften their ſtiffneſs and diſdainful pride, when they ſee a weight like that of Perſia ready to be thrown into the oppoſite ſcale. I am encouraged to uſe this freedom, illuſtrious miniſter, from the generous confidence, with which thou honoureſt me in thy diſpatches; a confidence, which more than repays the value of my ſervices, and even makes the danger, to which my ſtation expoſes me, diſappear. It rejoices me to be aſſured from thy authority, that the deteſtable practices of SACAS were founded rather on the chimerical hopes of a forward traitor, and ſome ſpeeches thrown out by malecontents, than any formed plan of the great Satraps of Media, or the general diſcontent of that province. There is a merchant of Samos at Suſa, by name PYTHON, a notable man, whom the Athenians employ as a ſpy upon the ſublime court. I ſaw one of his letters in the hands of a ſenator of my acquaintance, which relates to an inſtruction he had received from the ſenate to diſcover the progreſs of the Lacedemonian negotiation, and ſound the temper of the miniſters with regard to an embaſſy from hence. PYTHON writes word, that "no one could perſonally be more diſagreeable to the "Perſian court, than the reſident NICANDER; and "if ſome Athenians of addreſs and politeneſs, enabled "by large appointments to entertain magnificently, "and conform to the manners of the Eaſt, were ſent "thither, before the Lacedemonian repreſentations had "made any impreſſion, they need not to doubt of ſuc-"ceſs in whatever they undertook." The

The Athenians are juſt deprived of their beſt admiral by the death of Phormio; he was an officer of long experience and deſerved reputation, having diſtinguiſhed himſelf in the war againſt the Samians, and commanded with great bravery and ſkill at the ſiege of Potidæa, and the two naval fights off Naupactus, of which thou wilt find a relation in my diſpatches of the third year. His plain frugal way of living was extremely well ſuited to the ſimplicity of the firſt ages of the republic, and is now almoſt become a proverb. His loſs is much regretted by the ſailors, for though he kept up a ſtrict diſcipline, he behaved towards them with great humanity, and reſembled them in the honeſt roughneſs of his manners.

I was juſt upon the point of cloſing up theſe letters under the cover of HIPPIAS, when DIODOTUS one of the prytanes, a leading man here, made me a viſit, and informed me, amongſt other particulars, that a light frigate was juſt arrived, which brought letters from PACHES, importing that two ſhips of his ſquadron, the Paralus and Salamis, being out on a cruize, had diſcovered ALCIDAS's ſquadron lying off the iſland Claros. As ſoon as he received this intelligence, he ſailed from Mitylene; and though he purſued them as far as Latmos, he could not come up with them. He had intercepted letters from TEUTIPALUS admiral of Elis to this effect, that "whilſt they were "on their voyage to Leſbos, they heard of the ſur-"render of Mitylene. Upon this a council of war "was called, in which ALCIDAS declared himſelf for "a retreat, contrary to his opinion and that of other "officers,

" officers, who propoſed to land the troops by night, " and attack the Athenians, before they were ſettled " in their quarters."

Forget not, potent Satrap, to lay me at the feet of the mighty ARTAXERXES, the ſhadow of the divine OROMASDES on earth.

P.

LETTER LXXXII.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES.

THE hideous noiſes of the people, which prevailed lately for ſeveral days in this city, on account of the orgies and ceremonies performed at the Dionyſia, have left ſuch an impreſſion upon my mind, as is not to be effaced by any tranquillity I enjoy at preſent. I own to thee, HYDASPES, I am ſo ſhocked with what I have ſeen and heard, that I can no longer think I dwell with the polite Athenians. It is with difficulty I can refrain from imagining myſelf tranſported into a tribe of barbarous Scythians, where the wildeſt frenzy and licentiouſneſs have triumphed over all the dictates of common modeſty. Thus enthuſiaſm gets the better of our reaſon; and they, who attend to the falſe principles of the Greek ſuperſtitions, forget to behave with the ſame decency and good ſenſe in the buſineſs of religion, which influence them in the ordinary concernments of life. The entertainments, which pleaſe me moſt, are the public ſpectacles of the theatre; and thou mayſt imagine I have not been ſo incurious

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an obſerver of what paſſes round me, as to neglect being preſent at every repreſentation of this kind. Theſe are chiefly exhibited on their greateſt feſtivals; I mean thoſe of BACCHUS and MINERVA; and are celebrated with as much gaiety and ſplendor in the midſt of a tedious and expenſive war, as in the moſt diſſolute times of peace and luxurious plenty. For the genius of this people is equally turned to matters of diverſion and amuſement, as to the humane and military arts; and not a holiday in their calendar is unattended with martial exerciſes in memory of ſome hero, or a ſacred proceſſion in honour of ſome deity.

The Athenian theatre is built in a ſemi-circular form on one ſide, and ſquare-wiſe on the other. The ſpace compriſed within the former is allotted to the ſpectators, and contains many ſeats, which ariſe gradually to the top of it. The ſquare part in the front belongs to the actors, and in the interval between both lies the orcheſtra. The ſemi-circle has three rows of pillars raiſed one upon another, which form the body of the edifice in three different ſtories. From the higheſt of theſe the women ſee the repreſentation, protected from the inclemencies of the weather. As the actor can ſcarce be heard to the extremity of the theatre without aſſiſtance, the Athenians have contrived an ingenious method of ſupplying that defect; they have placed huge vaſes of braſs under the ſeats, which being toned to all the different modulations of the human voice, convey the ſounds more ſtrongly and diſtinctly to the ear of the auditor. The orcheſtra, particularly ſo called, is appropriated to the dancers

and pantomimes, who play between the acts, and at the end of divers repreſentations. On the one ſide ſtand the chorus; on the other the band of muſic. The ſcenes occupy the whole front of the building from ſide to ſide; and when they are changed, ſhew occaſionally to the ſpectators, either a private apartment or the forum, the city or the country. As only the porticos are roofed, it is neceſſary to draw ſail-cloths faſtned with cords to maſts over the reſt of the theatre, to defend the ſpectators from the heat of the ſun. But as this cannot prevent the warmth occaſioned by the breath and perſpiration of ſuch vaſt numbers, as are uſually preſent at theſe entertainments, they take care to allay it by perfumed waters, conveyed for that purpoſe above the porticos, which falling again through an infinity of ſmall pipes concealed in the ſtatues, with which the theatre abounds, diffuſe not only an agreeable coolneſs all round, but the moſt fragrant ſcents. I remember I was laſt year preſent in the theatre to ſee one of the tragedies of EURIPIDES, when on a ſudden we were diſturbed by a violent ſtorm of thunder and lightning, which immediately obliged all the ſpectators, in great confuſion, to retire for ſome time within the porticos behind the ſeats of the theatre. It was indeed one of the moſt miſerable hours I have paſſed ſince my arrival here, becauſe of the diſorder, which much neceſſarily attend ſo great a crowd; but I was amply rewarded for my ſufferings by the excellent performance, that ſucceeded it. The laſt play I ſaw was the Acharnenſes of ARISTOPHANES. It was exhibited a few days ſince, and is the ſecond comedy,

that

that riſing poet has produced. The judges pronounced in favour of it againſt ſeveral others, which were preſented to them; and the prize was beſtowed on him with honour. On the morning before the repreſentation, PHILEMON and I were walking together in the forum, and ſaw many of the citizens going up to the citadel, to receive their oboli (according to PERICLES's law) for frequenting the theatre. My patron took notice to me of it, and told me, that he had vehemently oppoſed that law, when it was offered, and therefore diſdained accepting the penſion, which it gave him a right to demand. In the afternoon I had the good fortune to accompany him to the play. We ſat almoſt in the center of the theatre, and were not only well ſituated for a view of the ſpectacle, but had at the ſame time an opportunity of ſurveying an audience of 30,000 people, without offence or interruption. Soon after we entered, the muſic joined in one of the moſt pleaſing concerts I have ever heard, compoſed by the union of the Doric harp with the Phrygian flute; and my good friend looked round him with that air of complacency and ſatisfaction, which the ſight of a numerous and chearful company is apt to raiſe in a mind always exerting its humanity. As thou haſt never received any letters from me relating to the Athenian theatre, or their manner of acting, I ſhall mention to thee in this its moſt ſtriking peculiarities. The firſt remarkable thing, which occurs, is, that the actors are all maſked; for they ſay, the expreſſion of the countenance would be loſt at the further end of the treatre without ſome invention of that ſort. In comedy it has

has a further uſe, in exhibiting caracciatura's of ſuch perſons on the ſtage, as the poet has an intention of ſetting in a ridiculous or ſcandalous light. I obſerved a man placed with a pitch-pipe in his hand behind one of the ſide ſcenes, which played a note in the right key, whenever it was proper for the actors to give a different modulation to their voices; and I ſaw another ſtationed near him with an iron plate at the bottom of his foot, which he ſtruck upon the ground at ſtated intervals, to guide them in the well timing of their action; as if the words and ſentiment would not almoſt of courſe lead an underſtanding player into the geſture and tone of voice, which may be requiſite to expreſs both.

For my own part, I am amazed, how the national delicacy of Athens can endure ſo many glaring contradictions to nature; but though I have converſed with the moſt judicious among them on this head, I find the irreſiſtable force of prejudice and cuſtom has got the better of all ſenſe of propriety and decorum. Nor was I more pleaſed with the comedy, than with the action. The plan of it was wholly factious, and deſigned to intimate the ſuperior excellence of peace above war. It repreſented an inhabitant of a little town in Attica much diſtreſſed by the loſſes he had undergone in the Peloponneſian campaigns, and unable to bear them any longer. The poet introduced this man making a private excluſive agreement with the Lacedemonian army, and enjoying the fruits of peace, while the Acharnians, Megarians, and Athenians endure all the painful hardſhips and ſervices of war. He

inſinuated, that the people are amuſed either by the threats or promiſes of the ſenate, and the ambition of CLEON and LAMACHUS their generals, who advance their particular intereſt by prolonging the common calamity. In ſhort neither the ſtate, nor its officers, nay, not even the honoured memory of PERICLES was treated with mercy in this one play. In the very firſt act of it he ridiculed the aſſembly of Athens and the embaſſadors ſent abroad by their countrymen, by ſuppoſing ſome of the latter to give a ſenſeleſs account to the former of a trifling negotiation with the Great King. In the ſecond act, he reflected on CLEON's character with peculiar ſeverity for the proſecution commenced againſt him laſt year, "as one, who expoſed "the commonwealth to the deriſion of ſtrangers." And the chorus pronounced a vaunting panegyric on ARISTOPHANES's qualities, as "an excellent cenſor "of manners, and counſellor of the ſtate; as one "who deſerved highly of the Athenians, and had been "much enquired after by the Perſian monarch." This fulſome ſtrain was received with a thunder of applauſe, and accompanied with a new dance of ARISTOPHANES's invention. The whole piece was interſperſed with ſeveral parodies on EURIPIDES, and an infinite number of alluſions to the public tranſactions.

When the play was over, I could not help diſcovering my ſurprize to PHILEMON, as we walked home together, at the general approbation given by the audience to ſuch unjuſt and indecent ſcurrility. Surely, ſaid I, the performances of your comic poets are as

ſo many ſeditious fire-brands thrown by public authority among the people to inflame them. Their wit is like the moſt dangerous and deadly poiſon, ſufficient to corrupt the minds of the vulgar againſt thoſe, who preſide over the arms and counſels of the ſtate. Are ye not apprehenſive, that contempt will one day beget hatred, and hatred will break out into violence and rebellion? Methinks while the citizens in the adminiſtration have the management of the ſtage, it ſhould ſeem natural for them to mould its politics according to their own ſchemes, and make it ſpeak in their favour to the people. That would never be ſuffered, anſwered he; you know in Athens we conſider the ſtage, as a centinel poſted by our conſtitution to warn the republic of approaching perils. We are afraid of intruſting the leaſt degree of power with the beſt of our citizens, and whenever we are brought to that neceſſity, we have a thouſand arts of watching over them; of putting them out of conceit with their greatneſs, leſt they ſhould grow too fond of it; and of ſetting them on their guard in actions of the minuteſt conſequence. How does it beat down the little pride of miniſters, to reflect, that all their meaſures are canvaſſed by a comic poet; and that their foibles are expoſed licentiouſly to the public view, while the ridicule is reliſhed and applauded by their countrymen? But, ſaid I, are not their meaſures enough cenſured or commended in the proper places of debating, in the aſſemblies of the people? Is it not ſufficient, that they are examined by the art of your orators, without being

being humorouſly abuſed by your poets and play-writers? Beſides, it is dangerous to regard ridicule as the criterion of truth, for it preſents us commonly with partial and unfair repreſentations of it. By throwing falſe colours over the dictates of wiſdom, we may give them the appearance of folly; and I take ARISTOPHANES to be more concerned for the ſucceſs of a witticiſm, than the welfare of the public; a buffoon, who could be ſcarce grave upon the ruin of his country.

PHILEMON was going to reply, and I would have talked with him more upon the ſubject, but he was unfortunately called off by ſome of his acquaintance. Forgive me then, if I vent my aſtoniſhment to thee. Is it not ſtrange, my noble friend, that the public archons ſhould authorize theſe ſatyrs on the public officers and meaſures of the ſtate? or that thoſe, who are intended by the conſtitution to reſtrain, ſhould yet be the legal encouragers of licentiouſneſs? Is it not impious, that in the very act of devotion to a deity they ſhould dare to laugh at, and expreſs their contempt for that deity? Is it not impolitic, that the civil magiſtrate ſhould not only be acceſſary to a libel on his methods of exerciſing the civil authority, but even ſtrike by this means at religion, the ſupport and foundation of that authority? Is it not more than abſurd, that every private citizen ſhould be paid out of the public funds, for going, where an affection for new diverſions would of courſe invite him; and that the revenue ſhould be thus idly waſted, in the midſt of a

war, and to the diſappointment of the public ſervice? Was it not inconſiſtent with the character of a wiſe man, to propoſe the law, which enacted this extravagance, and at once eſtabliſh it beyond the power of a repeal? Perhaps it would not have amazed one, if PERICLES had given money to the people, to prevent them from frequenting a place, where his own character was ſo infamouſly reviled. But was it not ridiculous, to take pains in quickening their appetite for ſcandal? and did he not act unbecoming the greatneſs of his temper, in ſtooping to ſuch a dirty and fatal art of popularity? Is it not incredible, that the repreſentation of a few tragedies ſhould have coſt more money to this city, than the naval armaments of all Greece, in defence of its freedom againſt XERXES? or that the Athenian republic ſhould be unanimouſly profuſe in improving thoſe pleaſures, which may contribute hereafter to deſtroy it, like the wretch, who decorates the funeral pile, on which he is one day to be burnt? How inconſiſtent is the lawleſs democracy of Athens! while the government, under which thou liveſt, potent ſatrap, is more ſteady in its movements, more jealous of its power, and more tender of the regard that is ſhewn to it. Were ſuch a fellow as ARISTOPHANES to publiſh his comedies in Perſia, with a view to ridicule the actions of ſo great a miniſter as MEGABYZUS, a fellow, who can expoſe an honeſt, and diſconcert a wiſe meaſure, who can recommend a weak one, and ſanctify a baſe one; by the holy fire of the magi, our monarch would put him to the ſevereſt

torments

torments his royal vengeance could inflict, and doom him to the lingering death of malefactors in the Aſh-tower * at Ecbatana.

C.

LETTER LXXXIII.

HIPPIAS to CLEANDER.

WHEN I can find leiſure from my employment as a merchant, I often turn my thoughts to literary ſpeculations, or engage with my acquaintance in political debates. It is at theſe times I indulge my imagination in laying out new plans for regulating the government of Perſia; and I can ſcarce forbear ſmiling at myſelf, when I reflect, how excellently I ſhould behave as a miniſter of ſtate, if my power of doing good were but equal to my will. Had I been with you at the time of conferring with your Athenian friend, I ſhould have entered more largely into the argument than you did, and not have ſoftened ſo much what was ſaid concerning the Grecian conſtitution. Indeed I cannot blame the diſcretion, which you uſed in your preſent circumſtances. But you have allowed more weight to his reaſoning in the cloſe of your account of

* An high tower being filled a great way from the bottom with aſhes, the criminal was thrown head-long from the top of it into them, where by means of a wheel they were raiſed about him, till he was ſuffocated. See VALER. MAX. L. IX. c. 2. Exter. §. 6. 2 Maccab. c. xiii. Note by the tranſlator.

it, than I can by any means perceive in it. And though, according to your letter, the man expreſſed himſelf with fluency and vivacity on the ſubject, yet methinks it was rather glittering in the words, than ſtrong in the ſenſe. I confeſs to thee, CLEANDER, after much deliberation, I am willing to impute the failure of XERXES's expedition, not to the valour of that divided people, among whom thou reſideſt, but to the raſh counſellors, who approved the deſign of that extraordinary invaſion, and to the meaſures which directed it. Thou wilt obſerve, I have endeavoured to ſpeak impartially to this point; thou knoweſt my relation to Greece, by my extraction from that country; thou knoweſt my relation to Perſia, from the happineſs I enjoy under the influence and protection of the Great King. I am not however ſo prejudiced in favour of the one, as to give the merit of its ſucceſs to bravery and good conduct alone; nor ſo blind to the miſtakes of the other, as either to conceal it's diſgrace, or palliate it's ill management.

The chief thing, which XERXES wanted, was a true judgment. Preſuming on his own deſerts, he was unfit to give or to receive good advice. Puffed up by the nauſeous breath of flattery, his miniſters knew the art of inſinuating, without even the appearance of ſuggeſting; and the conſequence of this proved, that no man was ever more amuſed, managed, and betrayed, than he, who fancied himſelf protected from all of them by his ſuperior underſtanding. His headſtrong temper led him into the wildeſt and moſt unnatural projects, while he fondly believed the power of the

Perſian empire was ſufficient to ſupport them. He entertained high notions of the regal dignity; and his ambition prompted him to unite the world in an univerſal monarchy. At the ſame time, he was not ſenſible of his own want of courage and addreſs to execute the ſcheme. And indeed I have often thought it wonderfully gracious in providence, that it did not impart a very conſiderable ſhare of valour or of wiſdom to one, who was ſo deſirous to become the deſtroyer of mankind. As ſoon as he had declared, that his enterprizing views were all levelled at the Grecians, he fitted out ſuch a fleet, as no harbour could receive; and raiſed ſuch an army, as could be drawn up on no plain in Europe or in Aſia. So unweildy a body of forces was an idle ſpectacle, not a formidable ſtrength; nor could he, as he vainly imagined, be advantaged by theſe numbers, ſince they would ſerve equally to incommode a retreat, or to prevent a victory. He ordered a cut to be made through mount Athos, as an inſtance of his greatneſs, and to perpetuate his name to poſterity; for his fleet might have coaſted round the Peninſula, or have been conveyed over the land with leſs difficulty. How ridiculous was his deſign of a bridge a-croſs the Helleſpont! How impertinent were his expreſſions of fury, when he found the waves, the winds, and the ſeaſons were not under his controul! After much time loſt in theſe vaſt and ſenſeleſs preparations, he ſwept like a mighty torrent over the nations of the earth. When he came to Abydos, he ſent meſſengers to all the Greeks demanding earth and water, except to the Athenians and the Spartans. He

knew how they had uſed his father's heralds on a former occaſion, and he conjectured how roughly they would uſe his on this. A great multitude ſubmitted to his embaſſadors, embraced his offers, and increaſed his army. After he had paſſed the Helleſpont, and advanced through Theſſaly, he arrived at Thermopylæ. There it was the Greeks ſhould have drawn down their forces; thoſe ſtreights ſhould have been conſidered as the barrier of their country. But ſome were afraid of the Perſian, and therefore willing to join with him; others ſhewed themſelves fooliſhly ſanguine for precedency, and choſe to ſacrifice their intereſt to form; many wavered in their opinion, ſtood debating on their meaſures, and delayed in their aſſiſtance. He found three hundred Spartans with LEONIDAS at their head to oppoſe him. He engaged them; and 'tis true they behaved with a bravery exceeding the bounds of probability, and almoſt too extravagant for romance. It is ſaid, the king placed himſelf on an eminence to ſurvey the battle. It is added, that he was even alarmed at what he ſaw; and had the Greeks been united at that time, I ſhall own, they might have defeated his forces in the ſtreights. Then XERXES would have deſerted his throne with anxiety for his perſonal ſafety, inſtead of leaping from it thrice in a ſudden conſternation.

One ſtep he might have taken, which would have opened his way eaſily through the ſtreights, and forwarded his conqueſt. He ſuffered his fleet to lie expoſed to ſtorms along the coaſt of Magneſia, and it was nothing more than an uſeleſs incumbrance on the ocean;

ocean; whereas he ought to have employed it in ravaging the coaſts, in burning the ports of Peloponneſus, in making deſcents upon their country, in creating a diverſion of their ſtrength; and thus he would have fatigued, haraſſed, and exhauſted the Greeks. But he had a wrong method of making the fleet act in concert with the land-forces (as he conſtantly called it) by which he only meant to keep it always in ſight, and that it ſhould do him no other ſervice than accompany his motions, and ſail cloſe by the ſhore, while he traverſed the land. Whether he did this, that it might be in his power to fly in caſe of a total defeat, it may be hard to determine. However no meaſure could be more abſurd, more unlike one of a reaching head, or a general of prudence and activity. He had many opportunities of ſending a ſquadron of ſhips (according to the council of DEMARATUS) to the iſland of Cythera, which is oppoſite to Lacedemon, from whence he might have annoyed and diſtreſſed it; but he improved none, and neglected them all. Inſtead of bending every accident to fixed and rational purpoſes, he ſuffered thoſe accidents perpetually to ſhift and vary the unſettled and irregular ſchemes of his policy; and the whole expedition ſerves to convince us of this, that far from contriving with phlegm, or performing with ſpirit, he determined with precipitation and warmth, and acted with cowardice and weakneſs.

The paſſage at Thermopylæ was now clear before him: he marched through Phocis, and when he had rifled the temple at Delphi, encamped in Bœotia. In the mean time, his fleet after a violent ſtorm, in which

it was much ſhattered, made an aukward and unſucceſsful attempt to ſurprize the Grecian ſhips, as they lay in the road of Eubœa; for not keeping the deſign ſecret, it got air, and came to the knowledge of THEMISTOCLES, who adviſed the Greeks to leave their ſtation in the night; and ſo by a counter ſurprize they ſtranded and ſunk ſeveral of the Perſian gallies. The reſt were forced to ſea, where they were deſtroyed by ſtreſs of weather. The next day the Perſians engaged with them at Artemiſium; and although the Grecians thought it right to retire, yet the conflict was ſuſtained with equal loſs on both ſides. Whereupon the former contented themſelves with invading Eubœa, inſtead of puſhing their main point on the continent of Greece, and the latter refitted with diligence in the ſtreights of Salamis. By this time XERXES was occupied in waſting Attica; and having put to the ſword a few old men in the citadel, who had miſtaken the ſenſe of the oracle concerning the wooden walls, he demoliſhed the temples, and lorded it over the empty houſes in Athens. The citizens looked for this event, and wiſely withdrew their women and effects into the neighbouring iſlands, while every man, who was able to bear arms, embarked in ſome ſhip. Here was XERXES's grand error, and the origin of all his loſſes. It was his want of ſagacity, and neglect of the advice of ARTEMISIA, which cauſed him to fight under ſo many diſadvantages at Salamis; and it was fear, which prevented his marching to the Iſthmus. He never dared to advance into the Peloponneſus, though if he had done it at firſt without

without delay, he muſt have found very feeble oppoſition. He was terrified with the apprehenſion of meeting the eight thouſand Lacedemonians, who, as the royal exile, their countryman, informed him, were like the three hundred at Thermopylæ. Even after the victory at Salamis, he might with proper management have defeated the Grecians; but tired with his journey, and diſpirited with ill ſucceſs, he fled back diſhonourably on his way to Perſia. He ſuffered a conſiderable part of his army to periſh by peſtilence and famine, that army, the thought of whoſe natural mortality drew tears from the tyrant, but the thought of whoſe unnatural one, occaſioned by himſelf, ſcarce touched his ſoul with remorſe. Inſolent, when he fondly expected proſperity, he was dejected, when he felt the weight of bad fortune; unable to ſteer his courſe through the difficulties, that ſurrounded him, every tide drew him along with it; every gale of wind carried him before it; continually toſſed about, he lived from day to day, ſubject to the hourly caprice of his temper, and at the mercy of every precarious event.

The imprudent, proud, and deſponding king ſat down to repoſe himſelf at Sardis; ſollicitous for the fate of thoſe numerous forces, which he had entruſted to Mardonius. His more imprudent, prouder and confident miniſter, promiſed boldly, he would ſubdue all Greece; if he failed in performing it, he preſumptuouſly declared, he would take ſhame to himſelf, without any reflection on the honour of his maſter. XERXES ſatisfied himſelf with the rant and vanity of a madman; he fooliſhly thought the ruin of MARDONIUS would

would caſt no cloud over his own reputation; and reaſoned as fooliſhly to himſelf, that he might retrieve his credit, if the meaſures purſued by this giddy officer were attended with ſucceſs. He ſtill hoped, notwithſtanding his diſaſters, if not by his own valour or his own merit, yet by the valour and merit of MARDONIUS, to enter SUSA in a triumphal chariot, and crowned with the wreaths of a conqueror; for though he was deſirous to be far from the danger, he was eager to take a ſhare in the glory.

But here his reaſoningss were falſe; his ſchemes were defeated. MARDONIUS wintered in Theſſaly, marched forward to Attica in the ſpring, and ſat down idly in Athens with his army. How ridiculous and incredible was a conduct like this? He made offers of accommodation to the Athenians, who, he knew, would refuſe them. He entertained however ſome groundleſs expectations, that they would one day accept them. But inſtead of waiting till they ſubmitted to his clemency, he ought immediately to have repaired XERXES's errors, which he had now a very fair opportunity of repairing. He ſhould have fomented the diviſion; he ſhould have improved the coolneſs between Athens and Lacedemon; he ſhould have penetrated into the heart of the Peloponneſus, before the wall at the Iſthmus was finiſhed, and ſpread deſolation where he went. He might at leaſt have prevented the Spartan ſuccours from joining the Athenians at Eleuſis. In this juncture what did MARDONIUS? A few hours after he received notice of it, he retired baſely into the champain plains of Bœotia. Thus he forfeited his honour; betrayed the intereſts

of

of his prince; and at Platæa his army fell a ſacrifice to their general's temerity and unſkillfulneſs. He ſeems to me in that battle to have thrown away his life with the ſame wantonneſs, wherewith he always conducted it; and whoever reads the hiſtory of this expedition, as it is excellently told by HERODOTUS, will find, that after his death the reliques of his ſcattered forces died wretchedly of hunger, ſickneſs, and diſtreſs. In ſhort a complication of miſeries will preſent themſelves to him in all all their horrors. The Greeks, elated by this ſingular deliverance, fought at Mycale with vigour and ſpirit. The Perſians indeed behaved with bravery, but were diſcouraged by theſe ſad calamities. XERXES left Sardis in haſte, returned to Suſa in deſpair, and ſmarted to his laſt hour for the follies of ambition.

I have now laid before you, CLEANDER, the ſeveral faults committed in this ſtrange and cruel expedition. Though the king had ſo many repeated opportunities of overcoming the Greeks; though every ſucceeding opportunity made amends for the loſs of the foregoing; yet they were given up to the ignorance and timidity of himſelf and thoſe about him. It would be to ſuppoſe his enemies were more than men, if one could poſſibly imagine, that powerfully aſſaulted without, and expoſed to ſedition and treachery within, they ſhould be able to defeat his millions, by the mere efforts of valour, without receiving particular aſſiſtance from his groſs and frequent miſtakes. Thus ended the invaſion of Greece, unjuſtifiable in its intentions, extravagant in its plan, ill managed in its progreſs, and fatal in its conſequences. C.

From Epheſus. LETTER

LETTER LXXXIV.

ORSAMES to CLEANDER. From Memphis.

SOON after my laſt letter to thee from Heliopolis, I departed for Memphis in that delightful ſeaſon, which ſucceeds the inundation. For at that time, when winter begins in other countries, Egypt enjoys a return of ſpring; the trees bloſſom, the earth is decked with a freſher verdure, the meadows are enamelled with flowers, and the air is purer and more ſerene. In the month of March * is held a ſolemn feſtival to ISIS. As the goddeſs repreſents univerſal nature, and preſides over every element, they dedicate to her a ſhip in theſe ſolemnities, intreating her to be propitious to navigation. The proceſſion begun with a company of women crowned with garlands, and apparelled in white, ſome ſtrewing the way with flowers, others ſprinkling it with perfumes and balſams. The emblems they carry much reſemble the furniture of a lady's toilet; and ſeveral I obſerved to hold behind them bright poliſhed ſpeculums, as it were in compliment to the goddeſs to reflect her image. Theſe were ſucceeded by a great number of both ſexes with torches and waxen tapers, in honour to the ſidereal deities; while a ſymphony of flutes and other inſtruments accompanied the voices of a ſelect chorus of young people. Then followed a mixt multitude of the initiated both men and women of different ranks and

* APUL. METAM. L. VI.

ages,

ages, habited in white raiments, and making a ſhrill noiſe upon brazen, ſilver, and golden ſiſtrums. The women had a looſe head-dreſs over their moiſtened hair; the men had their heads ſhaven. After theſe came ſeveral perſons of the moſt diſtinguiſhed orders in the prieſthood. One carried a burning lamp in a golden boat; another, whom I took to be the ſacred ſcribe, held in one hand the Caduceus of MERCURY, and had alſo a palm-branch with foliage of gold. The next was known by the rod of juſtice, and the golden patera, out of which he poured a milk-libation. Another attendant upon the prophet in this proceſſion carried a golden trough loaded with golden branches. The prophet himſelf came next, and after him was brought a monſtrous Anubis repreſenting HERMES. Then upon the ſhoulders of the paſtophori a molten heifer, the ſymbol of the great goddeſs; as alſo the myſtical image of that deity, which to me, who am no initiate, appeared no more than an urn with a round cavity in the middle, the mouth of it running out into a long ſpout, the outſide curiouſly emboſſed with Egyptian figures, and an aſp ſitting upon the handle with its body entwined, but the neck ſwelling and erect. The cheſt likewiſe was carried, that contains the hidden myſteries. When all their proceſſion, amidſt the acclamations of thoſe who bore a part in it, was come up, and had ranged itſelf upon the banks of the Nile, the prophet advanced forward to the ſhip; and having repeated a ſolemn form of words, with a lighted torch, an egg, and ſulphur, he performed the rites of purification, and named and dedicated it to the

the goddeſs ISIS. The veſſel was of citron-wood curiouſly poliſhed, the ſtern covered with plates of gold, and upon the canvas written the vows of the people for a proſperous navigation. As ſoon as the rites of purification were over, the yards being hoiſted, and the ſails unfurled, inſtantly all the people preſent diſcharge upon it their troughs loaden with aromatic gums, and pour a libation into the water. Then the cables are looſened, and the ſhip with a gentle gale rides down the Nile. The proceſſion returns in the ſame order to the temple of ISIS, where prayers are offered by the ſacred ſcribe for the preſervation of the Perſian empire, for the proſperity of Egypt, and ſucceſs that year to all the ſeafaring-tribe. The people preſent ſtrew bay leaves, vervain, and other ſweet herbs before the ſhrine of the goddeſs; and with that the aſſembly is diſmiſſed. This ceremony took its riſe from the times of SESOSTRIS after a famous naval expedition, when he ravaged the coaſts of the Red Sea. * For he commanded a ſhip to be built of cedar 280 cubits in length, covered with gold on the outſide, and with ſilver within; and this he dedicated to the ſovereign deities of Egypt. † In the temple of VULCAN are ſhewn the ſtatues of this king, his wife, and ſons, which he placed there in memory of a ſignal deliverance from the treachery of his brother, who ſet fire in the night time to his pavilion, as he lay at

* DIOD. SIC. L. I. c. 4.

† Ibid. & HEROD. Euterp. I. c. 107, 110.

Peluſium

Peluſium in his return from his great victories. * That magnificent temple, according to tradition, was begun by MENES the founder of this city; but thoſe ancient ſtructures, we may believe, were no more than the firſt rude eſſays of architecture, in which little regard was had to ſymmetry and proportion. † TOSORTHRUS, the next ſucceeding king, an aſſociate of MERCURY, inſtructed the Memphites in the art of maſonry, and taught them to ſquare and poliſh the ſtones, which they uſed in their buildings. ‖ RAMPSINITUS, a ſon or deſcendant of SESOSTRIS, built the weſtern portico of VULCAN's temple, and placed two coloſſus's of five and twenty cubits in height before the entrance, one facing the North, another the South; the former the Egyptians call ſummer, and pay great adorations to it, but none to the latter, which they call winter. PSAMMETICHUS afterwards added a portico to the weſtern gate, and encompaſſed the temple with a wall, ſupporting it with coloſſus's of twelve foot high inſtead of pillars. ‡ In the temple of OSIRIS is the ſtall of the ox Apis, who is often conſulted as a chief oracle, and his manner of returning anſwers is by receiving or rejecting what is offered him, which are accordingly interpreted lucky or unlucky. + The Nile runs on the Eaſt-ſide of Memphis; to the North and Weſt a great

* HEROD. Euterp. c. 99.
† SYNCELLUS.
‖ HEROD. Euterp. c. 121.
‡ DIOD. SICUL. L. II. c. 5.
+ HEROD. Euterp. c. 99.

lake ſurrounds it; for an hundred ſtadia ſouthward reaches an artificial bank, where anciently lay the channel of the Nile. This great work of turning the river, of filling up the old channel, and digging the lake, is aſcribed to their firſt king MENES. The bank is annually repaired by Perſia out of the tribute collected from thoſe parts; and the ſoldiers of the neighbouring garriſons are employed in that ſervice. For ſhould it blow up, the whole city of Memphis would be in danger of being drowned. The inner city, which is called the White Wall, is chiefly inhabited by Perſians, who are ſeldom fewer, including the garriſon, than 120,000. And this number the Egyptians are obliged to ſupply with corn, according to the taxation of DARIUS, paying the reſt of their tribute in money, which beſides the revenue from the lake Mœris amounts yearly to ſeventy talents. But this is levied upon the whole province, comprehending part of Lybia, as far as Barca and Cyrene. This part of the city was valiantly defended by us againſt the Egyptians and Athenians in the laſt revolt. The firſt palace, that ever was built, they tell you, was built here by MERCURY. In that, which, is at preſent ſtanding, SARSAMES the viceroy of Egypt keeps his court. It is ſituated upon the higheſt ground in the city, and fronts to the ſtately northern portico of VULCAN's temple. * Behind the palace lies a beautiful grove, and from the eminence you command a proſpect of the lake, to which there leads a gradual deſcent through viſtas, that open upon the water.

* STRAB. L. VI.

* It

* It is a common report of the prieſts, that three hundred and thirty kings have reigned in Egypt ſince MENES; that of them eighteen were Ethiopians, and among them one famous woman named NITOCRIS. But the ſame vanity, that has led them to impoſe upon mankind in other matters, and to claim to themſelves the earlieſt antiquity, has tended to perplex their chronology. They have uſed a like fallacy in ſtating the ages of their earlieſt kings, unleſs the lives of men are conſiderably ſhortened, ſince the diſtant period, when they reigned. The firſt extraordinary event in their hiſtory ſeems to be the treacherous murder of their firſt king MENES, which they fabulouſly allude to in the ſtory of his being deſtroyed by an Hippopotamus. But OSIRIS, they own, was ſlain by his brother TYPHON, and the Hippopotamus is the common emblem of TYPHON, as is particularly to be ſeen at Hermopolis. In their ancient ſuperſtition before the times of SESOSTRIS, who built ſhips of war, and extended his conqueſts both by ſeas and land, the ſea was an abomination to the Egyptians, as repreſenting to them the deteſtable TYPHON; perhaps becauſe that invader came acroſs the ſeas to Egypt. When they ſay OSIRIS periſhed in the ſea, they confound the hiſtorical event with their mythological allegory, and mean no more, than that the Nile, which is ſometimes fabled by OSIRIS, loſes its waters in the great receptacle of all rivers. Their coming acquainted with this element gave birth to new conceits, ſeem-

* HEROD. Euterp.

ingly as wild and extravagant as any I have mentioned before; * that the ſun and moon did not, according to the vulgar notion, ride in chariots through the air, but glided along in ſhips or veſſels, as through a thin liquid medium. And one often meets with an ISIS or an APIS upon a boat in their hieroglyphical repreſentations, as emblems of the ſun and moon, for which they have found a phyſical explanation, that the heavenly bodies are nouriſhed with vapours exhaled from the ſea and rivers. The chief obſtacle to the Egyptian navigation, and what kept them ſtrangers to the ſea ſo long, ſeems to have been the want of convenient ports and harbours. The Phœnicians being moſt commodiouſly ſeated for navigation, ſtruck much earlier into naval improvements, and made themſelves conſiderable by carrying on a traffic through all parts. By them the commodities of Egypt were exchanged for thoſe of other countries. They firſt came acquainted with the Greeks, and by them the Egyptians were made known to them; for though many of the Greeks owed their original to Egypt, yet were they by length of time eſtranged from their parent land. But the Phœnicians from the earlieſt times were known to the Egyptians. † The tradition is preſerved in Perſia of their original, or the place from whence they very anciently removed; and we are well aſſured, that they were once ſeated upon the confines of the Arabian gulf; and that coming from thence they ſettled where

* PLUTARCH. de ISID. & OSIRIDE.

† HEROD. CLIO. c. 1. POLYHYMN.

they

they now are. And this memorable tradition in Perſia helps me to account for a remarkable revolution, which I have traced out in the Egyptian hiſtory, viz. that about ſeven hundred years after the eſtabliſhment of their ancient dynaſties,* a great invaſion happened from a people, that came from the Eaſt, who after infinite ravages reduced the country, deſtroyed their temples, overturned their government, and ſet up a king of their own, to whom not only the Lower Egypt, but Memphis alſo and the upper region became tributary. For anciently what we now call Egypt was divided into three parts; Thebais was a diſtinct diſtrict; the dynaſty of Memphis was the upper Egypt; and that of Heliopolis, comprehending the reſt of the Delta, the lower region. Theſe invaders have been ever ſince called by the Egyptians *Hycſos* or ſhepherds, a word of contempt, implying a mean ignoble race, who followed no imployment more honourable than that of tending cattle. Now the Phœnicians having probably dwelt upon the borders of Arabia before they invaded Egypt, might, as the Arabians are, be famous graziers; and from their ancient ſituation might early have been acquainted with the ſeas beyond the Arabian gulf. The ſix firſt paſtor-kings reduced all Egypt under their power except Thebais; but after a ſubjection of about five hundred years, the Egyptians by help of the Theban king caſt off this foreign yoke. TETHMOSIS recovered Heliopolis, and was the firſt prince from Thebais, who ſettled his dominion there,

* Ex Maneth. fragment. apud JOSEPH. contra APION. L. I.

and * aboliſhed the barbarous cuſtom of human ſacrifices. † MOERIS about the ſame time expelled them from Memphis, and TETHMOSIS drove them into the extreme parts of the country, and took and ‖ ruined Abaris, now Peluſium, their laſt hold in Egypt. From theſe times Egypt became a flouriſhing kingdom, and increaſed in power and glory, till SESOSTRIS the brother of DANAUS extended his conqueſts through all Aſia, and ſet up an univerſal empire before NINUS and SEMIRAMIS. With a great naval force he took Cyprus and Phœnicia, led an army againſt the Aſſyrians and Medes, and after he had reduced thoſe nations, invaded the more diſtant cities and provinces of the Eaſt. He conquered Scythia as far as the river Tanais, and left pillars in ſeveral places in memory of his great exploits. Upon his return out of Thrace, ‡ he planted the Colchi upon the river Phaſis, leaving a part of his army to people the new colony. He contrived an itinerary to ſettle the boundaries and diſtances of the countries he had travelled over, and introduced the ſtudy of geography, which has ſince been greatly improved by the ſacred ſcribes. ⸸ But the firſt geographical tables are ſaid to be preſerved among

* EX MANETH. PORPHYR. περὶ ἀποχῆς. L. II. §. 55.

† EUSEB. Præpar. Evan. L. IV. c. 16.

‖ EUSEB. ibid. L. X. c. 11.

‡ HEROD. Eut. c. 163. AGATHIAS de Lazis agens, L. II. c. 53. Colchi dicuntur eſſe Ægyptiorum colonia, &c.

⸸ Ἔνθεν δή τινα φασὶ πέρεξ διὰ πᾶσαν ὁδεῦσαι
Εὐρώπην Ἀσίην τε——

Aſia

among the Colchi. This SESOSTRIS inſtructed the Egyptians in horſemanſhip. His army, they tell you, conſiſted of 24,000 horſe, beſides a much larger body of foot, with 27,000 armed chariots; and anciently an horſe was the Egyptian ſymbol for fortitude and boldneſs; but after the military genius of the Egyptians abated, that warlike animal was diſuſed; and by the canals, which that prince begun, and others have ſince carried through every part of the country for the more general conveyance of the waters, it is in moſt places rendered impaſſable for chariots and horſes. SESOSTRIS firſt made it a law, that no perſon ſhould forſake the profeſſion of his fathers. By this the military as well as the prieſtly tribes were likely to be kept diſtinct. The ſoldiery were then divided into two claſſes, the Hermotybies and the Calaſiries; and a thouſand of each choſen annually for the king's body-guard; and theſe were commonly taken from among thoſe, who had their ſettlement in the

Αἶα γε μὴν ἔτι νῦν μένει ἔμπεδον, νἰονοίτε
Τῶνδ' ἀνδρῶν ὃς μοῦνος καθίσατο ναίεμεν Αἶαν,
Οἳ δή τοι γεάπτυς πατέρων ἔθεν εἰρύονται
Κύβριας, οἷς ἔνι πᾶσι ὁδοὶ καὶ πείρατ' ἴασιν
Ὑγρῆς τε τραφερῆσι τε πέρι ξ ἐπινεισομένοισιν.

ARGON. IV. v. 272.

EUSTATHIUS in fine epiſt. ante DION. Περιηγ. SESOSTRIS Ægyptius, ut aiunt, cum multum terrarum peragrâſſet, itinera tabulis edidit, & tabularum deſcriptionem non ſolum Ægyptiis ſed & Scythis in admirationem impertiri dignatus eſt. Scythæ hi ſunt Colchi Ælam incolentes, quorum poſteri γεάπτυς πατέρων κυβριας habuerunt. MARSHAM.

Theban and Chemmite nomes. But the ſoldiery in general enjoyed a certain portion of lands exempt from all taxes throughout the ſeveral nomes both of Thebais and of the Upper and Lower Egypt. For the whole kingdom was divided by SESOSTRIS into thirty ſix nomes, for the more eaſy adminiſtration of it; and over each were appointed deputies to take care of the king's revenues. The warlike ſpirit of this prince aſpiring to deſpotic government tended to aggrandize the military orders, but to diminiſh the authority of the prieſts. The empire, which SESOSTRIS had eſtabliſhed, continued among his poſterity for ſome generations; but the military intereſt, which from his times was grown conſiderable, raiſed at laſt great commotions, particularly in the Lower Egypt; and ſeveral ſmall dynaſties were ſet up in prejudice to the Theban monarchy, till in the reign of ANYSIS the Blind, SABACON an Ethiopian took advantage of their diviſions, and invaded Egypt. ANYSIS ſaved himſelf by flying to the fens, where he lay concealed, during the whole period that SABACON ſtayed in Egypt, in an iſland called Elbo. That Ethiopian prince helped to re-eſtabliſh the power of the prieſts, and, they ſay, returned back into his own country by the ſummons of an oracle, when he had reigned fifty years with great juſtice and clemency. 'Tis recorded of him, that inſtead of puniſhing malefactors with death, he employed them in raiſing mounds about the towns they belonged to; by which moſt of the towns in Egypt are elevated ſo high above the waters. But his burning alive the Theban BOCCHORIS, a wiſe

and

and excellent prince, cannot be reconciled with that character. He alſo put to death NECHUS, ſovereign of the Saite dynaſty. After his departure, and the death of ANYSIS, SETHON a prieſt of VULCAN was inveſted with royal power; in whoſe reign the art military was neglected, and the profeſſion of arms brought into contempt. Then prieſtcraft begun to revive, and the tyranny of ſuperſtition was ſet up. Thus did one extreme lead to another, and the military ſtrength of Egypt having ſerved to eſtabliſh arbitrary power, made way to it's own deſtruction. By theſe revolutions things returned again into their ancient channel. The power and empire of Egypt was reduced, and the ſtate in the end was left defenceleſs. After the reign of SETHON they made an attempt to free themſelves from kingly power, but the event was anarchy and confuſion. Then twelve tyrants were ſet up by the different factions of the people, till PSAMMETICHUS, the ſon of NECHUS, defeated his collegues by a foreign force, and once more eſtabliſhed a monarchy. It flouriſhed again for ſeveral reigns till Egypt became tributary to the king of Babylon, and was afterwards ſubjected by CAMBYSES to the Perſian empire. But the Egyptians are naturally headſtrong and untractable; and by what I have obſerved of their diſpoſition they ſtill breath a ſpirit of liberty, and are as reluctant as ever againſt a foreign yoke. Thou well knoweſt, CLEANDER, the bold efforts they made, both in the reign of XERXES, and in the beginning of this. AMYRTEUS, who then upon the defeat of INARUS, and reduction of the

the country by MEGABYZUS, fled to the ſens, ſtill ſupports the old faction againſt Perſia; and reſides, as is reported, in the ſame inacceſſible iſland, where ANYSIS concealed himſelf ſo long. He reigns there like an independent prince over the followers of his fortune. But the friends of Perſia have reaſon to fear a more numerous and formidable party among the malecontents of Egypt, who might be willing to join him upon any deſperate undertaking; and I am perſuaded, that whenever an occaſion offers, their attempts to become independent of Perſia will be no leſs vigorous than they have heretofore been. Adieu.

L.

LETTER LXXXV.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. From Athens.

I Deferred ſending an account of the concluſion, which is at laſt put to the buſineſs of Mitylene, till the various turns, which it has paſſed through, were over, and till I was able by converſing with the principal perſons, who conducted the deliberations of the republic in the courſe of the affair, to lay before thee impartially the reaſons, which induced the people to to inflict the utmoſt, I may ſay the moſt extravagant ſeverities, with regard to the unfortunate Mitylenians, in the firſt decree, and to ſoften the rigor of them in ſo remarkable a manner in the ſecond, within the compaſs of a very few days.

I men-

I mentioned in former diſpatches, that the Athenians ſeemed inclined to come to the extremeſt reſolutions in puniſhing the revolt of Mitylene, as well to terrify the reſt of their allies from ſhaking off their dependance, as to gratify that warm reſentment, which inflamed them againſt the inhabitants of Leſbos, from whom they leaſt expected, that ſuch an ungrateful return would be made to their favours, and an example ſet to the other tributary iſlands, which might prove ſo prejudicial to the intereſts of this ſtate. For theſe reaſons, not to mention the naturally quick and ſenſible temper of the Athenians, and the flow of ſpirits, which every inſtance of good fortune throws them into, it is no wonder, that puſhed on by the orators of CLEON's party they paſſed the following decree in the firſt aſſembly, which they held upon the puniſhment of the Mitylenians:

" Under the archonſhip of EUCLIDES, on the fifth " day of the month Hecatombeon, THRASICLES the " ſon of MIDIAS of the tribe of CECROPS moved; " That whereas the inhabitants of Leſbos had ſoon " after the Perſian war concluded an alliance with the " commonwealth of Athens, by which they obliged " themſelves to pay yearly the ſum of fifteen talents, " and furniſh a ſquadron of ſhips, when demanded; " and likewiſe to remain firm allies to this ſtate, as " well in defence of the general liberties of Greece, " as the rights and prerogatives of Athens in particu- " lar; and whereas the Athenians in a juſt ſenſe of " the advantages they received from this alliance con- " ferred immunities and privileges on the inhabitants

" of Leſbos, greater than thoſe they beſtowed on any " other people in their dependance; and whereas the " Leſbians, ungratefully forgetting theſe benefits, did, " on pretences void of all foundation, not only violate " the treaty they have entered into, by withdrawing " the ſtipulated ſupplies of ſhips and money, but likewiſe " wholly deſert the intereſts of the republic in the midſt " of a dangerous and expenſive war, and by adding to " the number of it's enemies, contribute as far as in " them lay to it's utter ruin; and whereas the Athe- " nians aided by the gods, the revengers of infringed " leagues, and the juſtice of the divine NEMESIS, have " reduced the city Mitylene to ſurrender at diſcretion; " be it decreed by the ſenate and people of Athens, " that for the puniſhment of theſe numerous injuries, " for a warning to the reſt of their allies, who have " yet preſerved their fidelity unſhaken, and for the " aſſerting of thoſe rights, which an infraction of the " moſt ſacred ties gives over a perjured ally, that the " inhabitants of Mitylene, who have attained the age " of manhood, be without diſtinction put to death, " and the women and children reduced to ſlavery, " and ſold by lots; and let CHARES, DION, and " POLYCRATES be choſen to ſee this decree put in " execution."

The faction, which drove on the people to theſe extremities, were ſo eager to put the laſt hand to their deteſtable cruelty, that they prevailed with them, that a galley ſhould be immediately diſpatched with the three commiſſioners on board, and orders to PACHES to carry the decree into execution. The day after they

they were ſailed, the Athenians agreeably to their character began to ſoften; they found ſeveral citizens of authority amongſt them did not approve this ſeverity, and thought a leſs degree of puniſhment not only more generous, but more prudent. At the ſame time the Mitylenian deputies uſed infinite art and induſtry, that the affair might be again debated; and by the force of their perſonal applications with men of honeſty and good-nature, and motives of a leſs liberal kind with thoſe of mercenary diſpoſitions, obtained of the prytanes, that another aſſembly ſhould be convened to decide the buſineſs. When the people were met together in a great ſquare near the citadel, and the uſual ſacrifices and luſtrations were performed, a prayer was offered up for a bleſſing on the counſels of the republic. After the public crier had proclaimed thrice with a loud voice, ΤΙΣ ΒΟΥΛΕΤΑΙ ΔΙΑΓΟΡΕΥΕΙΝ; Who will give his opinion? I was very well pleaſed to ſee my friend PHILEMON, ſo often mentioned in the courſe of theſe letters, ſtep forward with a placid dignity, and mount the tribunal. He began with telling the people, that as ſickneſs had prevented him from giving his opinion upon the affair in queſtion the firſt time it was debated, he was extremely glad, they had reſumed their conſultations, that he might have an opportunity of uſing that freedom in ſpeaking his ſentiments, which they always allowed him. He was ſorry to find, that the continuance of the war ſeemed not only to have effaced the impreſſions of humanity from amongſt them, but even produced a diſregard for the ſoundeſt maxims of policy. That it

was

was a known obſervation, exceſſive puniſhments were far from having the effect propoſed; they rather occaſioned deſpair in the guilty, which was often the parent in them of efforts above their natural ſtrength to recover their freedom, and revenge themſelves upon their oppreſſors. At the ſame time the heightning the puniſhment with cruelty expoſed the inflictors to the hatred of their allies, who were juſtly apprehenſive of the caſe becoming their own on the ſlighteſt ground of offence, and to the redoubled vigour of their enemies, to whom ſuch proceedings appeared like a reſolution never to ſheath the ſword. He deſired them to obſerve, he did not ſpeak againſt puniſhing the authors of a revolt; that was a piece of juſtice due both to themſelves and the gods; but only againſt that indiſcriminate ſentence, which involved the innocent with the guilty, the miſguided with the miſguiders. He then put them in mind of recovering that reputation, which they had formerly for gentleneſs and lenity, and which of late years he was grieved to ſay they had forfeited. He concluded thus; "Athenians, "I have given that opinion, which I think not only "moſt honourable, but moſt advantageous for you. "Let it not be ſaid in Greece, that whilſt Athens "boaſts of being the only city, which has erected in "one of it's ſtreets an altar to Compaſſion, the in-"fluence of that amiable divinity is totally eraſed "from the hearts of it's citizens."

The ſpeech of PHILEMON was received with great approbation by his party; but it was immediately anſwered by orators of the other ſide, and the debate inſenſibly

inſenſibly grew warm. CLEON at laſt roſe, and with a vehemence both of action and utterance harangued the aſſembly to the following effect: "That what had paſſed that day was to him a ſufficient proof, that a republican government was of all others the moſt improper to maintain authority. By putting an affair of this nature in deliberation, after it had been once reſolved, they ſhewed a ſoftneſs in their nature and an unſteadineſs in their counſels, which would encourage their allies to riſe againſt them upon every occaſion. They could not ſurely be ignorant, that the authority they exerciſed over thoſe allies was meerly an uſurped one; and that no favours they could beſtow would be ſufficient to prevent their ſeizing every opportunity to recover their independency. That in order to keep them ſteady to their firſt decree, he imagined he needed only put them in mind of the injuries, which they had ſuffered from the Leſbians, who both by their ſituation as an iſle, and their power as a nation, were out of all danger of being enſlaved by the Athenian arms; ſo that their revolt proceeded from no other motive than the reſtleſs humour of mankind, which induces them to prefer a new and uncertain ſtate of affairs to their preſent condition, however happy. He declared, he ſaw no reaſon for excepting any out of the puniſhment, ſince they were all equally concerned in the crime; and exhorted the people to make an example of ſeverity, which might keep their allies within the bounds of duty, whilſt they were oppoſing the attempts of their numerous enemies."

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The faction of CLEON teſtified by clamours of applauſe, that his ſentiments met with their concurrence. At the cloſe of the debate DIODOTUS enforced the arguments for mercy in a very elaborate ſpeech. He told the aſſembly, that their debating twice upon an affair of this importance was an argument to him of their wiſdom, ſince there were no greater enemies to prudent counſels than anger and precipitation. He did not think the point in debate was, whether the Leſbians were guilty or not, (that was a point allowed on all hands;) but whether the decree, which they had paſſed two days before, was for the advantage of the ſtate. On this head he obſerved, that in all caſes of revolt a door ſhould be left open for repentance; and it was more particularly reaſonable with regard to a people, who being once free, could not be blamed for endeavouring to efface every mark of dependance. The argument he chiefly urged was, that as Greece and the adjacent iſles were divided into the popular and ariſtocratical parties, the former of which ſided with Athens; the latter wiſhed well to the Peloponneſian cauſe, they ought to conſider, that by involving all the inhabitants of Mitylene in the puniſhment, the ſeverity of it would fall heavieſt upon their friends of the popular faction, who, as ſoon as they had ſeized the power, ſurrendered the city to the army of the republic. For theſe and other reaſons (which I ſhould tire thee with repeating) he moved, "That the former decree ſhould be repealed, "and the authors of the revolt only, amounting to "about a thouſand of the magiſtrates and rich citizens

"of

" of Mitylene, put to death; that the fortifications of " the place ſhould be demoliſhed; their ſhips delivered " up; and their land divided into two parts, the one " to be dedicated to the ſervice of the gods, the other " to be ſhared out in lots to an Athenian colony."

The motion of DIODOTUS paſſed on a diviſion but by a very few voices; and a galley was immediately diſpatched with a repeal of the former decree. The rowers encouraged by the promiſes and rewards of the Mitylenian deputies made ſuch expedition, as to arrive at Mitylene juſt time enough to prevent PACHES and the commiſſioners from putting their firſt orders in execution. Thou wilt eaſily imagine, with how much joy this news was received by the inhabitants of Mitylene, who had nothing before their eyes but the preparations and executioners of their puniſhment.

I need not ſuggeſt to thee, enlightened miniſter, that the Athenians by carrying their reſentment ſo far againſt the revolted allies, and expreſſing the utmoſt unwillingneſs to afford the leaſt hopes of pardon to thoſe, who may follow their example, point out themſelves in what manner a war may be carried on againſt them to moſt advantage. For when once the colonies and tributary iſlands forſake this republic, and either ſet up governments of their own, or ſeek the protection of a ſtronger power, one may foretel without divination, that the ruin of Athens is at hand. Farewel.

P.

LETTER LXXXVI.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES.

EVERY art, HYDASPES, that tends to the comfort or ornament of human life, took its firſt riſe either from neceſſity or convenience; and I believe it often happens, that chance ſketches out the rude deſign, which is afterwards improved, matured, and poliſhed by reflection. That this was eminently the caſe in the origin of theatrical repreſentations is agreed on all hands. Tragedy and comedy were nothing more in their beginnings than hymns to BACCHUS, whom my friend CTESIPHON the ſophiſt conſiders in no other light than that of the beſt vine-dreſſer of antiquity. Some of his followers one day accidentally found a goat browzing in their vineyard. They took and ſacrificed it to their dead and perhaps deified maſter, from motives of gratitude as well as intereſt. The neighbours were called in, who joined with them in ſongs and dances; and the revelling being approved of by the company, was ſoon converted, we may ſuppoſe, into an annual ſolemnity. The perſons, who performed theſe extemporal hymns, either alternately or all together, were in ſucceeding times called the chorus. This cuſtom was transferred into their cities, and the ſubject of it was very much altered; for the compoſers of the ſongs having almoſt exhauſted their imagination by conſtantly exerciſing it on the ſame argument, recited

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the actions of ſome illuſtrious hero with the praiſes of BACCHUS. Thus the thing continued till the days of THESPIS, who is allowed to have been the firſt, who enlarged the ſcheme, and aboliſhing theſe rough and uncouth dithyrambs, (as the Greeks call them) introduced juſt and regular entertainments of written poems. In aid of the chorus he brought a ſingle actor upon the ſtage, who at fit intervals came out from the reſt, and amuſed the audience with an account of the exploits of famous men; then retired again, when the chorus had taken breath, which was ſtill the moſt conſiderable part of the performance. However, by this means a new turn was given to it; the buſineſs of the chorus was leſſened, and ſomething like a plot or fable was introduced. THESPIS went about the villages in carts, daubed the faces of his actors with lees of wine, and contended for the premium of tragedy, a Goat; while others vied for the premium of comedy, a baſket of Figs and a veſſel of Wine. He lived about the time of SOLON, who, by procuring an order from the court of Areopagus, obliged him to lay down an employment ſo unprofitable to the ſtate. That acute and penetrating lawgiver foreſaw the conſequences that would enſue, and (the Athenians ſay) in the ſpirit of divination foretold them.

ÆSCHYLUS improved upon this model by adding a ſecond actor, and diverſifying the fable. As he was extremely diligent in the ſtudy of HOMER, he ſet the Iliad before his eyes as the ſtandard of poetry. He obſerved the vivacity of the dialogues introduced there, and conſidered how much more agreeable they would

appear, if exhibited in ſuch a manner, as to ſeem real, and to flow naturally from the paſſions, ſentiments, and behaviour of common life. Hence he thought of caſting his plays into the form of converſation. By this time the chorus, which was at firſt the principal part of tragedy, was only an acceſſory ornament of it, and employed to relieve the actors, as the actors were before admitted to relieve that. Nay, the chorus, which was anciently the play itſelf, now ſerved only to expreſs the ſentiments of the by-ſtanders, to take the ſide of injured innocence and virtue, and to ſuggeſt ſuch reflections, as the well-minded part of the audience might reaſonably be ſuppoſed to make. ÆSCHYLUS taught the perſons concerned in it, to make thoſe movements in their dances, which are called the ſtrophe and antiſtrophe. The firſt of them is from eaſt to weſt, and intended to ſignify the diurnal courſe of the ſun; the ſecond is the reverſe of that motion. After ſome time they ſing the epode in concert with the muſical inſtruments, and ſtand ſtill in the middle of the ſtage, intimating by a quaint conceit the ſtability of the earth in the centre. While THESPIS lived, the players had no regular place of repreſentation, but contented themſelves with the moveable ſtage I have named to you. ÆSCHYLUS, as he was received with public honours and encouragement in Athens after the death of SOLON, employed AGATHARCHUS, a ſkilful architect, to build a theatre at the expence of the ſtate, and to contrive the decorations and ſcenery. He furniſhed his actors with maſks, dreſſed them in flowing robes agreeable to the

characters

characters they ſuſtained on different occaſions, and by the aſſiſtance of buſkins advanced them to the fancied tallneſs of heroes. In this he accommodated himſelf to the prejudices of the multitude, who even to this day entertain a notion, that all the ancient warriors, except little TYDEUS, were of a ſize beyond the common ſtandard of nature.

Thus is ÆSCHYLUS become the father of dramatic poetry; and as it is a greater inſtance of genius to invent than to improve, he may deſerve perhaps more regard than any, who have ſucceeded him. He has written one play, which is an aggravated deſcription, but indeed finely drawn, of the diſtreſs of XERXES and his army in the late invaſion; and repreſents the faithleſs and corrupted Perſians as deſtitute of the favour of OROMASDES, while Greece was under the influence and protection of her guardian deities. The reading of this play has ſuggeſted one thing to me, with which I will conclude this letter; and though it may be thought perhaps by ſome a very laudable partiality, I can by no means approve it in ÆSCHYLUS, notwithſtanding his great qualities: I mean, that whether the ſtory will admit of it or no, yet the compoſers of tragedy, like their brethren the comic poets, love to wreſt and warp the ſentiments, which ariſe from it, to the circumſtances of the preſent times; they make frequent alluſions to the miniſters of ſtate, and the meaſures purſued by their countrymen. They place every thing in a ſubordinate light to this arrogant republic: the ſtrongeſt ties of decency and intereſt can preſerve no government in Greece from theſe invidious compariſons;

and her ſiſter-city Lacedemon with their common enemy the Perſian are equally expoſed to this abuſe. Indeed it ought not to be wondered at, ſince an indifferent poet may recommend himſelf by this artifice to an Athenian audience; and the excellent EURIPIDES, from a fatal error in ſo eſſential a particular, has more than once been forced to yield to a cringing competitor. In a word, HYDASPES, they are ſo zealous in doing juſtice to their national merit, that they take ſometimes to themſelves what was hardly intended by the writer; and are ſo fond of the leaſt incenſe, which is offered to their vanity, that they receive with eagerneſs the grateful tribute, and applaud not ſo much the good ſenſe, as the flattery of the poet.

From Athens. C.

LETTER LXXXVII.

HYDASPES to CLEANDER. From Suſa.

DUring your ſtay at Suſa ſome years ago, you muſt have ſeen NEHEMIAH the king's cup-bearer. Though it did not fall in your way to make an acquaintance with him, or to hear any account of him, that might engage your attention, yet I will venture to affirm, if you knew as much of him as I do, you would give him a very honourable place both in your eſteem and your affections. He is by nation a Jew, and the ſon of one HACHALIAH, who, notwithſtanding the encouragement ſhewn to that province by our monarch and his predeceſſors, choſe rather to

dwell

dwell in Suſa, than with his countrymen in the land inhabited by their anceſtors. It was by means of the old man's continual reſidence in this city, and the humility of his deportment, that his ſon was raiſed by degrees to a conſiderable office near the king's perſon, and enjoyed a large ſhare of the royal favour. The queen's intereſt, joined to NEHEMIAH's, after a faithful attendance at court, procured him a commiſſion of great importance to the diſtreſſed people of Judæa, which inveſted him with a power of rebuilding the walls of Jeruſalem, ſettling the citizens in tranquillity, reſtoring their commerce, regulating the abuſes, that had crept into the cuſtoms enjoined them by their law; in ſhort, of making them ſatisfactory amends for a long and haraſſing captivity. Thus the indolence of the father, though complained of by his country, proved of real ſervice to it, as it opened a way to the activity of the ſon to exert itſelf in re-eſtabliſhing the ſingular and boaſted policy of the Jews. So true is it, that OROMASDES works by methods unknown to men, to ends as unforeſeen by them.

For many years NEHEMIAH was looked upon as a crafty and finiſhed courtier, much attached to the intereſts of his nation, and as thoſe, who hated him, ſaid, not a little to his own. For the gracious ARTAXERXES heaped on him great wealth, which was pretended to have been either illegally extorted by the ſale of offices in his gift, or to have been cunningly procured from the king by every abject art of flattery and diſſimulation. I, who knew him better, always ſaw him in an amiable light, but till lately never ſaw

him in a ſtriking one. Since his laſt return from Paleſtine, I have had frequent converſations with him, and find on examining into the ſtate and hiſtory of the Jews, that I have hitherto received imperfect information concerning them; and notwithſtanding the more perfect information I have now received, I confeſs, CLEANDER, my delicacy is ſcarce reconciled to them, either prejudice or common-ſenſe ſticks ſo cloſe to me.

NEHEMIAH is buſy in ſoliciting a renewal of the powers formerly granted to him, which are juſt expired. During his government he adminiſtred juſtice with fidelity, and ſupported the authority of his maſter with unuſual magnificence. He lived among his people twelve years, and executed all or even more than could be expected from the moſt dextrous. Animated by his preſence they fortified and rebuilt Jeruſalem, inſomuch that it vies with Sardis in grandeur; and to defend themſelves from the incurſions of their enemies, while they carried on the works, held their ſwords in one hand, and their trowels in the other. His table was open every day to an hundred and fifty chiefs among the Jews, and hoſpitably admitted ſtrangers, who came from all parts to be witneſſes of the thriving condition of his province. Whoever appeared in the city, of any figure, was invited to the governor's houſe, received with courteſy, and entertained with liberality. There were conſtantly provided in his kitchen one ox and ſix choice ſheep, and he treated his gueſts with the various wines of the Eaſt, and the corn of the Greeks. Theſe expences he bore out of his own revenues,

revenues, not only without laying any new tax on Judæa, but without accepting the regular income, by which thoſe, who had gone before him in that office, were ſupported. This ſhews the ſpirit and temper of the man. The bounty of the king had enriched him; and he, from a ſenſe of gratitude to his prince, and a love to his country, is well pleaſed with beſtowing thoſe riches to the honour, and in the ſervice of both.

The Jews (a nation the moſt ſtubbornly bigotted to themſelves) tell you, that when they were proſperous and independent, their conſtitution was founded on the narrow-minded ſcheme of ſeparation from the converſe of their neighbours, and a total excluſion from the arts and manners of other countries. They ſpeak in the higheſt terms of their lawgiver, who was either an inſpired prophet, a deſigning knave, or a warm-headed enthuſiaſt; and being reputed the ſon of a king of Ægypt's daughter, though deſcended from a Jew, was educated in the ſchools of Ægyptian learning and legiſlation. Pretending to be ſupernaturally aſſiſted, he reſcued his fellows in a moſt unexampled manner from a ſtate of intolerable ſlavery under the tyrant SALATIS. He conducted them by very painful marches into the land where they ſettled, and laid out the plan of a commonwealth for them, which is of a novel and peculiar caſt. After his death they engaged in ſeveral unſucceſsful wars, and were at laſt reduced to an ignominious bondage in Babylon, where they ſubmitted to the meaneſt employments. The mercy of CYRUS releaſed them, XERXES confirmed them in their privileges, and many of them followed his

his arms into Greece. Much however was wanting to compleat their reſtoration, when NEHEMIAH in that genius of ancient policy, which has long left the world, put himſelf at the head of large numbers returning into their country, redreſſed their grievances, emulated the fame of their firſt leader, and gained glory to himſelf, and ſtrength to his people.

Believe me, O CLEANDER, the man muſt be acted by a great ſoul, who, for the ſake of a perverſe nation, can deſpiſe the pleaſures of retirement, the ſplendors of a court, and the ſmiles of his prince, to encounter the violence of the raſh and the caution of the timorous, the whiſpers of the envious and the clamours of the factious, the abſurdities of the weak and the opinions of the wiſe, in the capacity of a reforming ſtateſman.

C.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

CLEANDER to MEGABYZUS. From Athens.

AFTER the high compliments thou payeſt to my taſte, in diſtinguiſhing the particular excellence of every piece I have ſent, and approving them all, it is by no means neceſſary to make ſuch another to my diſintereſtedneſs, and to inſiſt upon my laying out every Daric thou haſt remitted, without entering into a detail of the prices. But ſuch, I have obſerved, is the nature of the elegant arts, that a certain nobleneſs of ſpirit is inſeparable from whoever cultivates them with ſucceſs, or admires them with judgment. PE-

RICLES,

RICLES, whoſe taſte governed that of all Greece, was moſt magnificent in this kind of expence; farther indeed than his fortune would allow, eſpecially as he was too much a ſervant of the publick to attend with exactneſs to his private affairs. Though, upon his death, this appeared to the whole city to be the caſe, it is but very lately, that the younger PERICLES has been prevailed on to break that admirable collection, which his father had taught him to regard as the moſt valuable part of his inheritance. Here is an opportunity to do juſtice to thy commiſſion; and I cannot but congratulate theſe favourite works of art, amongſt which I have often walked with ſo much pleaſure, that they only quit the gallery of PERICLES to be more worthily placed in the palace of MEGABYZUS.

The diſpute about ACHILLES's armour was painted by PARRHASIUS for the prize at Samos, which he loſt to TIMANTHES. The judges, it is agreed, by their deciſion did not intend to determine the merit of the pieces ſo much, as to mortify his exceſſive vanity; but were diſappointed, and he left their tribunal with this reflection, "that it was "AJAX's conſtant ill fortune to ſee an unworthy rival "preferred." In this compoſition thou wilt obſerve nothing hard or glaring; the outline of the figures vaniſhes as it were into the ground; and every object leſſens and grows indiſtinct in proportion to its diſtance. The ſtrong light upon the principal groupe of the two heroes with the armour lying between them, catches the eye immediately, and goes off by degrees upon the leſs conſiderable parts. What an amazing effect of art

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is this, compared with the performances of the old maſters! The utmoſt effort of EUMARUS was to diſtinguiſh the ſex by the ſhape of his figures; ARDICES of Corinth found no better a way than to write under them; and CIMON firſt varied that ſingle upright attitude in uſe till his time. While they found ſuch difficulty to repreſent nature, it was not to be expected they ſhould improve it; and not yet maſters of deſign, they could not turn their thoughts upon the artifices of colouring. But there is a curioſity in theſe rude eſſays; and the ſpecimen I ſend, will lead thee through the whole progreſs of the art.

The like degrees of improvement may be obſerved in the ſuite of ſtatues from DIPOENUS and ANTHERMUS to PHIDIAS and POLYCETUS. The Hermæ, which I take to be the firſt attempts, are very imperfect; they are only a head upon a ſquare block of ſtone: but the ſucceeding ages have conſidered this form as ſomething ſacred, and the greateſt men are ſtill thus repreſented. When they advanced as far as whole figures, they merely copied what they had ſeen in Egypt. Compare the Caſtor and Pollux of DIPOENUS with the Oſiris and Orus; the legs joined together, the arms ſtuck cloſe to the ſides, and the drapery growing as it were to the body, prove them of the ſame family. But the Greeks will not allow this original of ſculpture, which robs their DÆDALUS of the invention. The accounts of this hero (for ſo he is ſtiled) are like all of his age, obſcured with fable; yet in many parts of Greece, if we may believe a conſtant tradition, works of his are ſtill to be ſeen.

One

One of theſe in the ſame groſs manner of carving thou wilt find in this collection; it is a ſmall ebony figure of one of the attendants of BACCHUS, and performs of itſelf thoſe antick tumblings uſed in the proceſſions of the gods. This is done by quickſilver in the cavity of the image; a contrivance, which an old author expreſsly aſcribes to DÆDALUS, and which may account for the greateſt miracles related of his art.

Among theſe ancient rarities I would place the large earthen vaſes from Magna Græcia; the paintings on them are as much above the groteſque Egyptian taſte, as they are below the Greek correctneſs. Of the ſame rank are the Etruſcan ſtatues and bas reliefs, which have all of them ſome inſcription in the old language of their country, long ſince obſolete.

The moſt beautiful proportions, collected from a number of the choiceſt ſubjects, diſpoſed in the moſt graceful attitudes the maſter's idea could frame, and finiſhed with the moſt ſcrupulous care, compoſe what POLYCLETUS calls his canon, his pattern of ſymmetry. He has given us alſo a treatiſe under the ſame title, wherein he lays down and illuſtrates the principles he went upon in his work. It is the roll I have put into the hand of the figure.

Inſtead of the nobleneſs and grace, which we admire in POLYCLETUS, STIPAX of Cyprus preſents you with a view of common nature. His ſubject is a favourite ſlave of PERICLES, broiling ſteakes over a fire, which he blows with his mouth. But the droll pictures of PYREICUS are perfect in this way; his markets and barbers-ſhops are the very things themſelves.

ſelves. No poetical imagination, no divine airs, no elegant draperies, but ſuch countenances, ſuch habits, ſuch accidents, as one daily ſees among the common people. His landſcape is agreeable to his figures; for caſcades, and temples, and porticos, he varies his ſcene with a pond, a hovel, or a mill. But there is ſuch a truth of deſign, and ſuch an amazing force of colouring, that he divides the ſuffrages of the curious with ZEUXIS himſelf. The portraits of this maſter are no leſs eſteemed: he expreſſes the whole man in ſuch a manner, that the phyſiognomiſts have formed their judgments for his draughts with the ſame ſucceſs as from the life itſelf.

There is a delicacy and brightneſs in enamel, that takes every eye. We owe this invention to the genius of POLYGNOTUS; and thou wilt perceive, to what perfection he has brought it, by the groupe of Trojan ladies, which he copied from a large hiſtory of his own in the Pœcile. The celebrated ELPINICE, whom the common talk of Athens makes the painter's miſtreſs, ſat for the principal figure.

The ſilver vaſes and pateræ are of Mentor; the brazen lamps and helmets of Calamis and Mys. There is ſomething ſo grand in the general ſhape of theſe, the bas reliefs are ſo juſtly deſigned, the foliage is ſo looſe and tender, and every ornament ſo advantageouſly diſpoſed, that one would wonder to ſee ſo much taſte and diligence thus employed. But ſuch furniture is in the higheſt requeſt here, and the moſt trifling utenſil muſt be the work of a good hand. The head embоſſed upon the golden ſhield is that of a Carthaginian general,

general, who commanded in Sicily, done by his countryman BOETHUS; ſo magnificent alſo are theſe proud merchants. It was a preſent to PERICLES from the Syracuſian, who took it in battle.

The laſt and moſt conſiderable acceſſion to this collection was owing to the gratitude of PHIDIAS. When he was dying in priſon, he bequeathed to his beloved patron the citron cabinet in the form of a Doric temple: in this were depoſited all the ſtudies for his great works, and whatever of the ſame kind he had got together of other maſters. Here is the model of his MINERVA, with the contrivance for taking off the gold uſed in the ornaments; which, when he was accuſed, he offered to do before the aſſembly, and prove by the weight he had not embezzled it. As all the public buildings were under his direction, the deſigns of architecture are in vaſt quantities; they will thoroughly acquaint thee with thoſe ſtately fabrics; and on thy ſofa at Suſa thou mayſt ſurvey at leiſure the magnificence of Athens. The ſketch of the battle of Marathon is by PANÆNUS; the painting from it fills the principal compartments in the Pœcile. The heads of the generals are very ſlightly marked in the deſign; in the picture the Greek captains were drawn from the life. From whence PANÆNUS had his ideas of our commanders, I know not; but thy uncle ARTAPHERNES, who is drawing a bow at the head of the Parthian horſe, has very much thy air. It is for that circumſtance I mention this deſign. It would be endleſs to point out the beauties, that fill this cabinet; for not an artiſt of reputation, but paid his court

to the favourite of PERICLES by ſome ſpecimen of his ſkill. I muſt confeſs, I have more pleaſure in turning over theſe unfiniſhed ſketches, than in viewing the more laboured pieces. The fire, that is ſtruck out at the firſt thought, is often loſt in the progreſs of the work; and the genuine character of the maſter appears in the drawing, which in the picture muſt in ſome degree be ſacrificed to the taſte of the public. With how few touches do they give the ſtrongeſt expreſſions? And what a readineſs of conception muſt have produced that freedom of ſtroke?

Upon the report of my having purchaſed this collection, which I am ſuppoſed to do by commiſſion from my brother HIPPIAS for ſome Ionian lords, ZEUXIS paid me a viſit, and offered me with great politeneſs ſome of his moſt capital deſigns. I would have made him a ſuitable return; but he aſſured me, it had been long his practice not to accept of any. SOCRATES too, the young philoſopher, whom I have often mentioned in my letters to SMERDIS, has obliged me with the models of his three graces, which are among the chief ornaments of the Acropolis. He ſaid at the ſame time with a ſmile, "You ſee, my "friend, I began by ſtudying the outſide of man."

When PHIDIAS was removed from the ſuperintendance of the publick works, ſeveral of the moſt eminent maſters came hither from all parts of Greece, in hopes of ſucceeding him. But men's minds were at that time ſo inflamed by the two parties contending for the management of the ſtate, that what tended to the ſplendour and ornament of it was entirely neglected; and

the war, which broke out ſoon after, has been carried on at ſuch an expence, as to engroſs the whole revenue. The deſigns begun in the late adminiſtration are ſtill ſuſpended; and the marble imported by PERICLES from Paros and Leſbos, lies half wrought in many parts of the city. One of theſe diſappointed artiſts, TELEPHANES of Phocis, applied to me for a recommendation to my Ionian correſpondents; and brought with him the model of a ſtatue of the heroine LARISSA, which he had made for the city of that name in Theſſaly. It pleaſed me ſo much, that I engaged him immediately. Indeed I ſhould think thy commiſſion imperfectly executed, did I not accompany the collection with a perſon qualified to range and have the care of it. He has given in a deſign for a repoſitory, which, with the little alterations to be made upon the ſpot, may be erected either in thy gardens at Suſa, or in the midſt of that delicious grove, which makes thee ſo fond of the ſuburb of Ecbatana. As I found him extremely mortified at the neglect ſhewn him here, I diſcovered to him my real intention of ſending him into Perſia. He received it with great ſatisfaction, and thanked his good fortune, which took him from a country, where the ſtorms of oppoſite factions ſpared not even the genius of a PHIDIAS, to place him in thoſe happy climates, where thou preſideſt, and ſuffereſt no cloud of envy or detraction to intervene between the chearing beams of royal favour, and the virtue that deſerves them.

W.

LETTER LXXXIX.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES. From Athens.

PHILEMON returned home the other evening in a very peeviſh humour from ſome debate in the aſſembly, which it ſeems had been carried on with a peculiar vehemence. "I have long thought it, ſaid he, "a ſignal inſtance of the decay of oratory in our public "councils, that ſpeaking to the purpoſe is laid now "a-days intirely out of the notion of eloquence. The "young men, inſtead of informing themſelves of the "merits of the queſtion, are pleaſed with premeditated "witticiſms, convinced by ſubtle fallacies, and ſuffer "themſelves to be led away by the force of invectives, "rather than the weight of argument. The old ones "are fooliſh enough to encourage them in this fatal "way of thinking; are artful enough to perſuade them, "that they embrace patriotiſm in adhering to a faction; "are mean enough to flatter theſe boys of premature "judgments and no experience; and are wicked "enough to ſpoil the whole riſing generation, for the "ſake of thoſe ſordid views, which intereſt a part only "of the preſent. You know young NEOCLES, de-"ſcended from THEMISTOCLES, the moſt celebrated "admiral in Greece. He entertained us to day with "a ſpeech compoſed of what — wilt thou believe me? "of a wire-drawn ſimile. He played the image before "us in a thouſand ſhapes. To ſay nothing of its being "remote from the matter in hand, it was imagined

"with

" with no delicacy, and expreſſed with no ſpirit." " I know him well, anſwered I, and could name many others, who reſemble him in this idle turn, and yet by no means equal him in the reſt of his character. The laſt time I accompanied you to the aſſembly, the Mitylenian decree came on, a determination of the laſt importance to the commonwealth and her allies. Do not you recollect, how the forward EPÆNETUS attempted to anſwer the wiſe and elaborate oration of DIODOTUS with equal petulance and ignorance; for he ſpoke neither ſenſibly nor grammatically. The ſame youth in PERICLES's time opened and revived a point of infinite perplexity and obſcurity, which could never be decided by our moſt intelligent legiſlators, relating to ſome privilege claimed mutually by the ſenate and the people; and the diſpute therefore for many years had been wiſely laid aſleep. His ſpeech was filled, not with precedents furniſhed him by the Theſmothetæ, but with perſonal reflections dictated by CLEON; for which the ſame CLEON publicly commended him in the moſt fulſom ſtrain of adulation, and compared him to the greateſt of the Athenian heroes. On that occaſion I was charmed with the behaviour of PERICLES, who, according to his cuſtom, reſuming all the arguments, that had been dropt in the debate, thought it right at the ſame time to expreſs his contempt for theſe levities, and with exquiſite art and decency began to the following effect;" " That he " could be as well pleaſed as any of the citizens in " Athens, that the young men ſhould be remarkable

" for the ſame ſpirit of liberty, which had diſtinguiſh-
" ed their anceſtors; but ſhould be better pleaſed, if
" they added to it the ſagacity and prudence, which
" might enable them to diſcern the nice and intricate
" nature of queſtions of right between the ſenate and
" the people." PHILOSTRATUS, the nephew of the trierarch, your acquaintance, and DITHYRAMBUS, the ſon of the Areopagite, are in the ſame party with thoſe I have juſt mentioned to you, and both of them are late initiates. PHILOSTRATUS has parts and learning; but by taking a wrong turn in the management of popular buſineſs, as yet he has never made a conſiderable figure. He chuſes the warm and declamatory, not the cool and rational way of ſpeaking; and profeſſes to enter into no ſubject, as he expreſſes it, except when he is raiſed by it, or, as a plain man would ſay, in a downright paſſion. DITHYRAMBUS does not aim at the improvements of knowledge, and has received from nature a ſhattered underſtanding. In one reſpect he is more modeſt than PHILOSTRATUS, as he declares himſelf concerned for his violence of temper; and in another reſpect as unhappy, becauſe he never attempts to correct it. How loſt is the condition of that ſtate, which is governed by the frivolous or the vicious, the partial or the mad! " But, continued PHILEMON, can you wonder, that thoſe, who have not paſſed the exerciſes of their childhood with even tolerable induſtry or ſucceſs, ſhould, when they become a few years older, appear to no advantage in the public eye? Can you wonder,

that they, who have not ſo much as received a ſuperficial tincture of the ſciences, but who have been educated either in an indolence, which enervates their faculties, or an activity, which debaſes them, ſhould turn out bad counſellors and bad men? It is not to be wondered at; it is the natural and the neceſſary conſequence of the vice or inattention, that has infected their minds early; and they have no one to upbraid for it, but themſelves and their inſtructors. I wiſh, added he, the old laws, which enjoin an accurate inſpection into the lives and qualifications of the orators, were maintained in their full force. We ſhould then be free from theſe gnats and waſps of the community, that exert their ſtings fretfully and wantonly, without contributing in any ſort to the general good." "After all, interpoſed I, the worſt of the matter is, that the evil ſo heavily complained of is not confined to the faction of CLEON and TOLMIDES; it extends even to our beſt citizens, when the power is veſted in their hands. For this cunning, which is generally practiſed by the oppoſers of the majority and it's leaders, produces the craft of miniſterial influence and corruption." And, ſaid an Athenian in the room with us, who till this moment had been ſilent, in ſuch caſes what is to be done? Virtue is an unequal combatant for vice. The arts of the one are ſlow and dilatory; thoſe of the other more ready and expeditious: the one are not accommodated to the generality of mankind; the other fall in with every complexion, and veiled in certain plauſible appear-

ances will operate on the infirmities of the wiſeſt. If the men you have been blaming apply themſelves to the vanity or ambition of their neighbours, wiſdom will teach you, as it were in ſelf-defence, to lay hold of their other foibles, to feed their avarice, and gratify the imaginary wants of luxury." "Farewel then, exclaimed I, to every generous and worthy principle! Farewel to every enlarged and uniform plan of policy! Indeed melancholy is the proſpect, when the ſtrength of miniſters conſiſts not in the ſuperiority of their own ſenſe, but the weakneſs of others; when the countenance of public virtue ſickens with the pale caſt of fraud and diſſimulation; when all the notions of integrity, ſo natural to the untainted hearts of youth, are induſtriouſly damped by theſe veterans in political iniquity, and cruſhed in the very ſhell. Such being the arts of government, and ſuch the dangers, to which it is expoſed, I aſk no other favour of the gods, than that they would never place me on that pinnacle of greatneſs, from whence I may behold this ſcene of guilt and folly; much leſs where I may be inſtrumental in the encouragement of either."

C.

LETTER

LETTER XC.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. From Athens.

THERE have been ſeveral reports current in the city concerning the fleet, which, as I mentioned in former letters, was ſent by the Peloponneſian allies to the relief of Mitylene. It is now certain, that after having been diſperſed by a ſtorm near Crete, they regained the coaſt of Peloponneſus, and were joined near Cyllene by ſixteen gallies under the command of BRASIDAS the Spartan, an officer of riſing reputation. When they had received this reinforcement, they purſued their courſe, as it is ſuppoſed, for Corcyra, to take advantage of the diſorders, which have lately ariſen there. The Athenians have lately received diſpatches from their ambaſſadors in that iſland, wrote during the height of the ſedition, which gave ſome account of the riſe and motives of it. Thou mayſt remember, noble ſcribe, that ſeveral naval battles were fought between that ſtate and Corinth, whilſt the quarrel laſted, which preceded this war. The Corinthians ſent home their priſoners without ranſom; and they, as a return of gratitude, uſed their utmoſt endeavours to prevail with their fellow-citizens to break the alliance with Athens, and join the Peloponneſian army. Being ſtrongly oppoſed in this unjuſt attempt by PYTHIAS, preſident of the ſenate, they accuſed him of conſpiring to deliver up the town to the Athenians; but when the cauſe came to a trial,

they were unable to prove their charge, and condemned to pay a large fine. This ill ſucceſs ſo exaſperated the accuſers, that they raiſed a tumult, and at the head of a faction, which oppoſed the Athenian intereſt, entered the ſenate by violence, and maſſacred above ſixty ſenators of that party, and PYTHIAS amongſt them. The ſeditious afterwards aſſembled the people, and maintained, that what they had done was neceſſary to preſerve the independence and liberty of the iſland. The Athenians, upon the receipt of theſe diſpatches, ſent orders to NICOSTRATUS, admiral of their ſquadron at Naupactus, to ſail directly to Corcyra, and ſupport the democracy. They are likewiſe preparing to equip a larger ſquadron for the ſame ſervice, if the encreaſe of the tumult ſhould make it neceſſary. They are the more concerned at this ſedition, becauſe the naval force of Corcyra renders that iſland a very uſeful ally: its fleet at the beginning of the war was reckoned equal to that of any of the Grecian ſtates, except Athens.

I doubt not, that CRATIPPUS has informed thee of the proceedings againſt the unfortunate Plateans, ſince that affair falls more naturally within his province than mine. I ſhall however lay a brief narrative of it before thee. The commander of the ſiege obſerving, that the inhabitants of Platea were reduced to great extremities, ſummoned them to ſurrender on condition, that no puniſhment ſhould be inflicted upon them, till their cauſe had been tried and determined according to the rules of juſtice. In purſuance of the capitulation, twenty five commiſſioners were ſent from Lacedemon,

who,

who, without laying any crime to the charge of the Plateans, put this ſingle queſtion to every one of them, "Have you done any ſervice to our ſtate during the "war?" The Plateans, ſenſible of the tendency of this ſtrange examination, repreſented in the moſt pathetic terms the ſervices, which their city had done to Greece in the Perſian invaſion, and the honors, which had been decreed them for their public ſpirit; to which they added, that they had not embraced the Athenian alliance, till the Lacedemonians had deſerted them. They accuſed the Thebans of being the ſource of their misfortunes, by attempting to ſurprize their city in the midſt of peace. The Theban embaſſadors in an inflammatory harangue reproached the Plateans with having forſaken Thebes, their mother city, to fight under the banners of the Athenians, whom they called the tyrants of Greece. They ſaid, the merits of their anceſtors, inſtead of being a plea in their favour, were an addition to their crimes, ſince they had degenerated from their virtues. That the Thebans, far from attempting to take Platea in an hoſtile manner (as had been repreſented) were introduced by ſome of its wealthieſt and worthieſt citizens, with no other views than to aſſiſt their countrymen in ſhaking off an unnatural alliance.

The Lacedemonian commiſſioners, who had private orders to ſacrifice Platea to the reſentment of the Thebans, perſiſted in demanding a reply to the queſtion propoſed; and as it was anſwered in the negative by every one of the captive Plateans, they were all put to death without mercy, to the number of two hundred.

hundred. When the news of this illegal and barbarous act arrived here, the Athenians, to expreſs their juſt ſenſe of the fidelity and reſolution of the Plateans, gave the freedom of the city, and a privilege of being elected into offices, to the ſurvivors and their children. The names of theſe new citizens were engraved on a column, and ſet up in the citadel near the temple of MINERVA.

An accident lately happened to me, which had almoſt diſcovered my real buſineſs at Athens, and laid me at the mercy of the reſentful multitude. One CHREMES, a merchant of Chios, who deals in wines, was taken up by order of the Prytanes, on ſuſpicion of managing a correſpondence with Thebes and Sparta. Several papers relating chiefly to the condition of the Athenian docks, arſenals, and navy, were found in the wine veſſels and other places of concealment in his houſe, which were examined in the ſenate, and a report afterwards made to the people of the diſcovery. Among theſe papers was a letter from CRATIPPUS, which CHREMES had not an opportunity of putting into my hands before he was ſeized. A great clamour was raiſed immediately over the city againſt me. The merchant was examined, but declared he had very little acquaintance with me, and not much more with CRATIPPUS, whom he had ſeen at Rhodes, and knew nothing of the contents of the letter. I was ſummoned however to attend the tribunal of the Archon Polemarch (who has a juriſdiction over ſtrangers) and found one of the ten orators appointed by the ſtate to plead public cauſes, prepared with an indictment againſt me, importing, that I had violated the laws

laws of hoſpitality, and wickedly made uſe of my abode at Athens to keep up a correſpondence prejudical to the republic. When I came to make my defence, I alledged, that there was nothing appeared from the letter, which could any ways render me obnoxious to the ſtate. That far from having correſponded with CRATIPPUS, it appeared from the letter itſelf, that I had not anſwered one, which he had wrote to me. That the paſſage, wherein he mentioned the *coincidence of our employments*, referred only to the collections of curious ſtatues and pictures, which we both made in our travels. That the reſt of the letter was nothing but news of an indifferent nature, which there was no law to prevent one friend from communicating to another. Several of my Athenian friends did me the honour to teſtify, that my behaviour during above four years reſidence in the city had been very fair and unblameable; and that neither from my acquaintance, converſation, or actions, I had given the leaſt ſuſpicion of carrying on any practices againſt the ſtate. By this means I got rid of a troubleſome affair, which I have reaſon to believe was fomented by CLEON, to revenge himſelf upon me for a ſatire againſt him, in which he ſuſpected I was concerned. The piece, which gave him this ſingular offence, was compoſed one night at CLINIAS's at a ſympoſium, where ARISTOPHANES the comic poet and myſelf were preſent. When ſupper was over, being heated with wine, and enlivened by the gaiety of the converſation, we went out in a body crowned with garlands, and with torches in our hands, and ſung the ſarcaſtical Iambics under CLEON's windows.

dows. But it happens always in a divided ſtate, that when any perſon is oppoſed by one ſide, the party, in whoſe cauſe he ſuffers, take him into their protection; for CLEON's reſentment againſt me excited the zeal of his enemies to repreſent the proſecution as groundleſs and malicious.

The ſeaſon is very unhealthy here, for the great rains, which fell laſt winter, having ſtagnated in the low and marſhy grounds about the city, are corrupted by the violent heats of the ſummer, and the air is greatly infected. HIPPOCRATES apprehends another plague. Should that dreadful calamity break out again, I ſhall beg leave (if the king has no occaſion for my ſervice in any other part of Greece) to make a ſhort viſit to my family at Epheſus.

Noble ſcribe, I live in daily expectation of thy letters, which will not be leſs acceptable to me, than the chearing rays of MITHRAS are to the boſom of the hard earth, which has felt the ſeverity of the winter's froſts. Adieu.

P.

LETTER XCI.

ORSAMES to CLEANDER. From Memphis.

I HAVE always thought, CLEANDER, that one of the principal ends of travelling was to know the laws and policies of other countries; and that many wiſe and excellent things might be learnt from the uſages and inſtitutions of foreign nations, which

were

were wanting in our own. In the appointment of laws for the well-ordering of mankind, a regard has been every where had to certain unchangeable principles in the nature of things, which previous to any human laws inferred an univerſal obligation upon all rational creatures. But it was the depravity of mankind, that made the authority of the human lawgiver neceſſary, and cauſed the ſanction of civil puniſhments to be ſuperadded to the primary obligation, which our natural ſenſe of right and wrong inculcated upon us. And without this proviſion the ends of our entering into ſociety could not be anſwered; for though the things, that are naturally good or evil, ſeem obvious to the common reaſon of all men, yet the bulk of human race would not in all inſtances be capable of diſcerning them. And unleſs ſuch things, as are obligatory in their own nature, were further enjoined by human laws, many would be ignorant of their obligation to them; and many, who know what they ſhould do, would nevertheleſs, to excuſe themſelves, pretend ignorance. For which reaſon I applaud the wiſdom of our own legiſlature * in puniſhing ingratitude, a kind of immorality the moſt odious in it's nature, however it happens to have eſcaped the cenſure of the laws in other countries. It may indeed be ſaid, ingratitude is not of the ſame nature with thoſe crimes, which do open violence to the rights of mankind, and tend directly to deſtroy the being of ſociety. Yet I ſhall always believe, what

* XENOPH. Cyropæd.

I was

I was early taught to maintain in the ſchools of Perſia, that the wretch, who is capable of ingratitude, has broke looſe from every tie, that engages us to our friends, our parents, or our country.

In ſpeaking of the Egyptian laws, the conſideration of which has led me to this ſubject, there are two or three, that I ſhall firſt mention, which are eſtabliſhed upon ſure and unerring principles of reaſon and truth; and the ſanction of which ſeems to be preſcribed or limited according to the moral differences of things. * The firſt is, "that whoever kills another wilfully, "whether the perſon he kills be a bond-ſlave or a free "man, ſhall ſuffer death." For the malignity of this crime conſiſts in the injuſtice of the action, and the malice and cruelty of the perſon, who commits it; and however the quality of the ſuffering party may differ, the malice, cruelty and injuſtice of the action is ſtill the ſame. For the further ſecurity of the innocent againſt the indirect attempts and ſecret villainy of miſchievous and deſigning men, it is by law appointed, "that falſe accuſers ſhall ſuffer the ſame puniſh-"ment, which the falſly accuſed were to have under-"gone, had they been convicted of the offence." A plain principle of natural juſtice, that the innocent ſhould not ſuffer with the guilty, preſcribes to them another of their laws, "that women with child, who "have incurred the penalty of death, ſhall not be ex-"ecuted till they are delivered;" a rule of juſtice, which ought certainly to be received in every ſtate, and

* DIOD. SICUL. L. I. c. 6.

followed

followed by every tribunal, as it has already been received in Greece, and particularly, as I am informed, by the ſolemn council of Areopagus. I more wonder, that this principle of natural juſtice ſhould ever have been violated in the laws of any country, than that it is adhered to ſo ſtrictly in this. * I have often thought, CLEANDER, that cuſtom in Perſia, which for the perfidy and treaſon of one perſon dooms his whole family, with all the innocent branches of it, to utter extirpation, a moſt unjuſt appointment, and cruelty to the higheſt exceſs. Pardon me, my friend, this freedom of cenſuring the laws of that ſtate, to which I am attached by every ſolemn tye, and to whoſe laws I ſhall always pay the ſtricteſt obedience. The wretch, who betrays his allegiance to his prince, without doubt deſerves the ſevereſt tortures. But why muſt the innocent and the guilty be involved in the ſame puniſhment? I fear the natural injuſtice of ſuch a ſentence can hardly be palliated upon the reaſon commonly alledged, that the puniſhment is inhanced to the guilty by being extended to all, who are ſo unfortunate as to be allied to him. I am ſtrongly ſenſible of the horrid nature of this crime, and am perſuaded men ought to be deterred by the ſevereſt examples from attempting it. Yet I

* JUSTIN. L. X. c. 2. AMMIAN. MARCELL. L. XXIII. c. 31. Leges apud Perſas impendio formidatæ, inter quas diritate exuperant latæ contra ingratos & deſertores. Abominandæ aliæ, per quas ob noxam unius omnis propinquitas perit.

cannot

cannot underſtand, why thoſe, who are no ſharers in the guilt, ſhould ſuffer more than they do in the puniſhment of the guilty perſon, for that, which is of itſelf the greateſt calamity to any family to happen in it. A whole kindred in this caſe is deſtroyed at random; and ſome perhaps among them, who, if ſpared, might from the awe of ſo near an example, as well as the goodneſs of their own nature, have diſtinguiſhed themſelves more ſignally for their loyalty to their ſovereign, than the criminal perſon had done for his perfidy and treaſon. If the puniſhment of the criminal is thought likely to raiſe reſentment from the family, and put them, who are left, upon meditating revenge; yet will not men naturally be more deſperate, when without any regard had to their own innocence they are deſtined to ſuffer for another's offence? I have reaſoned with great freedom upon the matter; but the few inſtances we have of this law's being executed in it's full rigour, ſince the unhappy fate of * INTAPHERNES in the reign of DARIUS, warrants me to believe, that it has appeared juſt and equitable to the lenity of our mighty monarchs to mitigate the ſeverity of it. † Alike ſevere in its kind is another law we have againſt deſerters. But if the infliction of ſeverity is never the principal end of puniſhments, and a regard ought to be had in them as well as to the reformation of the offender, where that may be, as to the putting a reſtraint upon other men; I ſhould think

* HEROD. L. III. c. 119.

† AMMIAN. MARCELL. loco jam citato.

the caſe of deſerters better provided for by the laws of Egypt than by thoſe of Perſia. For amongſt other excellent rules of military diſcipline, it was appointed by SESOSTRIS, "that ſoldiers, who mutinied or fled from their colours, though not puniſhed with death, ſhould be degraded from their poſt, and ſtigmatized in the moſt public manner with all poſſible marks of diſgrace, and yet be permitted to reſume again their military character, if they wiped off that diſgrace afterwards by ſome brave and valorous action." By this he intended, that diſhonour and infamy ſhould be looked upon as the greateſt evils, and more grievous than death itſelf. He conſidered alſo, that thoſe, who were put to death, could never be further ſerviceable to their country; but ſuch as were degraded only, might, for the ſhame they had incurred through their paſt miſconduct, and from a deſire to recover their reputation, exert themſelves with redoubled vigour, and be the more uſeful for the time to come. Theſe are inſtances, CLEANDER, of ſuch laws, as have a moral fitneſs in their own nature; and the form and ſanction of each ſeems to be preſcribed or limited from the nature of the thing itſelf. But with regard to laws in general, it muſt be obſerved, that though they are all founded upon one natural principle of virtue being rewardable and vice puniſhable, yet the particular kind of ſanction is not always ſo clearly pointed out from the nature of the thing itſelf, but left to the diſcretion of the lawgiver to appoint. And therefore, though the offence in itſelf be naturally puniſhable, the poſitive part of the law, which determines the puniſhment, however wiſely de-

ſigned, may not be univerſally binding. If then the laws of this country in ſome inſtances appear ſingular, we are to conſider, how well they anſwer the thing propoſed; they may not be leſs wiſe, becauſe in thoſe circumſtances, which are arbitrary and poſitive, they differ from our own. It is the inſtitution of this country to puniſh perjury with death: the puniſhment is indeed arbitrary; but if we reflect upon the heinouſneſs of the crime, that it is the moſt daring impiety againſt the gods, and a violation of the ſtrongeſt bands of faith among men, we ſhall have leſs reaſon to think it diſproportionate to the offence.

The laws of nature ſeem in general to require, that he, who hath unjuſtly taken away the life of another, ſhould himſelf be put to death. But when this heinous crime is attended with other aggravating circumſtances; when the offender hath violated the ſtricteſt ties of blood, beſides the common ties of nature, eſpecially if he has taken away the life of thoſe, who were the authors of life to him; all nations are agreed to puniſh ſuch execrable impiety not only with death, but with the moſt lingering kinds of it, and the ſevereſt tortures they could invent. For it has always been eſteemed the wickedeſt act, that men could be guilty of, to take away the lives of them, from whom they received their own. But when a caſe happens the reverſe of this, "that a parent ſhall deſtroy it's offſpring," it is ſurely an horrid and unnatural act, and equally unjuſt as the other. For although the parent be the inſtrument of giving life to its child, yet have they no better right to take that life away than the child has

to

to take away the life of its parent. But it has been thought, that the violating that natural awe and veneration, which is due from the child to the parent, aggravates the heinouſneſs of the act in the former inſtance, which does not in the latter; and that regard ſhould be had to this difference in determining the puniſhment. And upon this the Egyptian law ſeems to be founded relating to ſuch parents, and is indeed a pretty remarkable one, "That parents, who killed "their children, ſhould not die themſelves, but be "forced for three days and nights together to hug them "continually in their arms, and have a guard all the "while over them to ſee they did it." This was doubtleſs thought a puniſhment, which would be attended with the deepeſt ſorrow and compunction. The inexpreſſible horror and remorſe, that the wretch muſt feel upon the occaſion, it was thought, would be as effectual to deter men from the unnatural act, as even death itſelf. By the law of this country "if any upon the road ſaw a man likely to be killed, and did not reſcue him, being able, he was to die for it; and if he were not able to defend him, yet he was bound to diſcover the ruffians, and to proſecute them in a due courſe of law: If he neglected this, he was to be ſcourged with a certain number of ſtripes, and to be kept without food for three days together." The ſanctions of this law are arbitrary and poſitive; but the law goes upon a ſuppoſition in the firſt inſtance, that he, who being able, did not defend the aſſaulted perſon from violence, was acceſſary to the violence committed upon him; and the neglect

puniſhable in the ſecond is his not having done all he might in order to diſcover the ruffians, and bring them to juſtice. Yet it muſt be owned, the penalties in this law are exceeding ſtrict, and would, I fear, be in many inſtances unjuſt. A like poſitive ſanction belongs to theſe other laws, "That ſuch as revealed the ſe-"crets of the army to the enemy were to have their "tongues cut out. That they, who coined falſe and a-"dulterated money, or contrived falſe weights or coun-"terfeited ſeals, and ſcriveners, who forged deeds, or "razed public records, or produced any forged contracts, "were to have both their hands cut off." Which all go upon this notion, that every one ought to ſuffer in the part, wherewith he had offended, in ſuch a manner as not to be repaired during life. And ſo in the caſe of adultery, the woman was to loſe her noſe, that ſhe might be puniſhed in that part, where her charms chiefly lay.

Now as there are ſome things, which being not of abſolute and univerſal obligation, are nevertheleſs fit and convenient in certain inſtances, and ſome, which as the exigences of human affairs require, are neceſſary to be provided for only at particular times and in particular places; the laws relating to theſe things are not of a mixt nature, but merely poſitive both as to the matter and form. By a law of this ſort all the Egyptians are enjoined to give in their names in writing to the governors of the provinces, ſhewing how and by what means they got their livelihood. "He, who gave a falſe account in ſuch "a caſe, or if it appeared he lived by robbery or any "other unjuſt means, was to die." This certainly was well

well calculated to promote honeſt induſtry, and prevent public miſchiefs and diſorders in the ſtate. But there is one concerning theft of a moſt extraordinary ſort, which I will mention under this head. It may ſeem indeed to countenance iniquity; but was intended for the benefit and redreſs of the plundered, when the other laws were found ineffectual to put a ſtop abſolutely to that evil, which Egypt from the nature of the country hath always been expoſed to. For the ſlime and mud, which are brought by the waters in the annual inundation, ſettling in different parts of the Nile, and the lakes, which are cauſed from time to time by its overflowing the country, make thoſe little iſlands of ruſhes, which have always given concealment to theſe bands of robbers, that infeſt the country. As it was thought impoſſible therefore to put a ſtop to this evil entirely, a law appoints, "That "thoſe, who enter into theſe infamous companies, "ſhall give in their names to one, who is their "chief, and whatever they ſteal ſhall engage to bring "to him. They, who have been robbed, are to ſet "down in writing every particular, expreſſing the "day, and hour, and place, when and where they loſt "their goods, and apply to this receiver, who, though "well known, is connived at by the ſtate; and after "a valuation made of the ſtoln goods, the true owner "is to pay a fourth part of the value, and to receive "them again."

But for fear of being tedious, I will enlarge no farther on this ſubject; nor ſhall I take upon me to defend the laſt inſtitution, as I can never think it pru-

dent or adviſable to give a licence to evils, in order to reſtrain them. But the Ægyptian laws muſt be allowed upon the whole to be wiſe, and equitable, and worthy of commendation. * And that theſe laws may upon no occaſion be evaded by the colluſion of the parties charged with the execution of them, extraordinary care is taken to fill the courts of juſtice with perſons of the moſt approved integrity and unblemiſhed character. The prophet or high prieſt of Egypt is always preſident in the tribunal of juſtice, or over the thirty, who are appointed for the hearing of all cauſes. In judiciary proceedings the plaintiff exhibits his complaint in writing, diſtinctly and particularly ſetting forth wherein he was injured, and after what manner, and the value of the damage ſuſtained. The defendant on the other ſide, having had a copy of his adverſary's libel, anſwers in writing to every particular, either by denying, or juſtifying, or pleading ſomething in mitigation of damages. The plaintiff replies in writing, and the defendant rejoins. After the litigants have thus exhibited their libels twice, it belongs to the thirty judges to conſider among themſelves what ſentence they ſhall pronounce. Then the prophet turns the effigies of truth towards the party, who carries his cauſe. The judges uſed to receive a certain ſalary from the king, which is ſtill continued to them by the favour of our mighty monarch out of the revenues of Egypt; and he may juſtly be regarded as the guardian of their laws, who ſuffers them to enjoy their

* DIOD. L I. c. 6.

own

own judicatures in all cauſes, except where the rights of his natural ſubjects are concerned. * The prieſts ſay, that their ancient MNEVIS or MENES was the firſt, who inſtituted written laws; and that his laws are preſerved among the other ſacred treaſures of wiſdom, that have been delivered down to them from the great MERCURY, his aſſociate and counſellor. The reſt have at different times been received into the *Hermaic* books, and the higheſt honour thereby paid to the authors of them. SESOSTRIS is generally reputed the founder of all thoſe, that relate to military diſcipline. The Theban BOCCHORIS is juſtly famed for his wiſe and excellent laws concerning contracts and debts, and for the preventing of exceſſive uſury. He forbids impriſonment for debt, judging it unreaſonable, that the perſons of men ſhould lie at the mercy of inexorable creditors, or be confined to gratify the covetouſneſs or reſentment of private people, when they might be of uſe to the publick ſervice. Many of the Egyptian laws have been copied by the ſages of Greece, who all reſorted hither as to the fountain-head of knowledge and wiſdom; and this rule in particular, I am informed, is followed in the Athenian laws of SOLON. The kings of Egypt from the times of SESOSTRIS, after the prodigious increaſe of their power and greatneſs, became impatient of controul; and the ſtrict laws, which the wiſe founders of the Egyptian polity † had appointed for the regulation of their conduct in

* DIOD. L. I. c. 7.

† Ib. L. 1. c. 6. initio.

every inſtance both of public and private life, were now grown obſolete and forgot, till BOCCHORIS * endeavoured to revive the ancient diſcipline, and inforce by his own example thoſe excellent rules, which were calculated for the mutual happineſs both of the prince and people. But the invaſion, that happened in his reign, too ſoon overturned his laudable deſigns. † The law, which enjoins, that the Egyptians ſhall give in their names to the governors of the provinces, ſhewing by what means they got their livelihood, and that yearly, was enacted by AMASIS. DARIUS the father of XERXES is held in much veneration here, and his name is inrolled among thoſe of their beſt princes and greateſt benefactors. He confirmed the body of their old laws, and added new ones to it. He ſhewed great indulgence to the Egyptian prieſts, to make them amends for the impiety of his predeceſſor CAMBYSES in the profanation of their religious rites. He was initiated into their myſteries, and reſided for ſome time in the colleges of Heliopolis and Memphis. Whilſt living, they eſteemed him as a god; and when dead, the people allowed him all thoſe ancient honours, which were cuſtomary to be performed to the former kings of Egypt after their deaths.

I have reſided in this country much longer than I intended at my firſt ſetting out from Perſia; but after I had taken ſome pains to ſurvey the famous monu-

* —— τὰ περὶ τὴς βασιλείης πάντα —— ἐξακριβῶσαι. Ibid. c. 7.

† HEROD. L. II. 177.

ments

ments of the Upper Egypt, and the laſting remains of theſe once powerful kingdoms, I was willing to make ſome enquiry into their hiſtory, their laws, and their ancient learning. And when I found my curioſity would detain me in theſe parts, I took the opportunity of being inſtructed in thoſe liberal ſciences, which are the boaſted inventions of Egypt, and are no where taught to greater advantage. But now having thrice ſeen the inundation of the Nile, I begin to think, though with reluctance, of leaving the country. But before I ſet forward for Peluſium, I intend a ſhort excurſion to the Pyramids, with the famous HERODOTUS and ſome others Grecian ſtrangers, who are lately arrived at Memphis. Adieu.

L.

LETTER XCII.

HIPPIAS to CLEANDER.

I FIND myſelf in ſuch a debating humour, that you muſt indulge me, brother, in arguing upon ſome other particulars of your converſation with the Athenian, than, thoſe to which I have already ſpoken. The two advantages of monarchy, which you mentioned, deſerve to be inſiſted on more copiouſly, viz. The opportunities of munificence, which are lodged in the hands of a great king, and the awe of his abſolute power. Nor had your friend ſo much cauſe to triumph in the force and clearneſs of his reaſoning.

The wiſeſt legiſlators in all republics have eſtabliſhed their laws by the ſanction of rewards and puniſhments; becauſe

becauſe the expectation of the one, or apprehenſion of the other, is apt to operate moſt ſtrongly on the human mind. But it often happens in governments of the popular form, that theſe ſanctions are weakned. Envy occaſions a neglect of merit, and defeats it of thoſe honours, to which it has an equitable claim, while many reſtraints on the iniquity of the powerful are taken off by their influence on the body of the people. And thus the intention of the legiſlator, who firſt formed the commonwealth, is gradually forgot after his death, or openly perverted by his ſucceſſors. On the contrary, in monarchical ſtates there is the ſame perpetual legiſlator, becauſe a king, (unlike the temporary legiſlators, who preſide in democracies, whoſe intereſts muſt vary according to the different circumſtances of the times) will always find himſelf in the ſame ſituation and intereſts with thoſe, who have gone before him. He may be a faithful guardian of the laws and theſe ſanctions: and a prudent prince will maintain them in their full vigour; he will not ſuffer them to be wreſted to the low purpoſes of jealouſy and malice, or to ſtrengthen the hands of a faction. Diſdaining to act like the inconſiſtent multitude in the democracy of Athens, he will countenance the deſerving with his power, and encourage them by his bounty, while the deſigning are unable to evade his penetration, or fly from the rigour of his juſtice. In commonwealths the recompence at any time beſtowed on the good citizen is mean and inconſiderable, and rather gratifies the vanity, than advances the intereſt of the man. But in monarchies the rewards given to a

faithful ſubject are ſuch, as call for his attention and regard. The proſpect of them will incite him to endure toil, and the poſſeſſion of them will animate him to face danger and death in the ſervice of his country. Is a crown of fading oak-leaves to be compared with the gift of an extended domain? Is the moſt elegant collation, which the Prytaneum of Athens can afford, equal in value to the wealth, dignity, and titles, which the ſovereign of Aſia may heap on thoſe, whom he vouchſafes to favour? Theſe rewards he may not only impart to the man, whoſe merit more immediately demanded them, but even ſuffer them to continue in his family, and be tranſmitted to his remoteſt poſterity. This ſpirit of liberality hath prevailed very eminently in the kings of Perſia. CYRUS, when he had ſubdued the world, and ſettled his empire in ſecurity, inriched and aggrandized the attendants on his fortune beyond their moſt ſanguine expectations; and no one ever exceeded XERXES in the princely generoſity of his temper. Do you think, when he ſeated himſelf on the top of the mountain Ægaleos, that he might ſurvey the battle of Salamis; do you think, I ſay, when he wrote down the name and country of every man, who behaved well in the fleet, that he had not an intention to diſtinguiſh the valour of his officers and the dexterity of his ſailors, with ſome tokens of the royal eſteem? He ſteadily preſerved his intention. He recompenced the ſincere, though unſucceſsful endeavours of his ſervants; and many in Perſia at this day enjoy the effects of his munificence.

But

But you will ſay, that I have hitherto in the tenor of my argument ſuppoſed a king perfect in the arts of policy, and in all the regal qualifications. Methinks I hear you telling me, that I have taken it for granted, that every prince is a philoſopher; whereas nothing is more true than the reverſe of it, becauſe providence has not made them ſuperior to others in their natural endowments, and their acquired ones are ſeldom ſo good. Permit me, brother, to anſwer, that I mean chiefly to confine my obſervations to Perſia; and however this remark may be verified in many countries, I am free from all apprehenſions, leſt the throne of CYRUS ſhould be filled with a CAMBYSES for the future, the wildeſt and moſt uncultivated mortal, who hath dared in any period of time to be ambitious. Thou knoweſt, that the excellent ARTAXERXES has eſtabliſhed a noble method of education for thoſe, who are to ſucceed to the empire. The young heir is committed to the management of four perſons, who are very remarkable in the kingdom on account of their wiſdom and their virtue. The firſt is ordered to inſtruct him in the principles of Magianiſm and the Perſian government; the ſecond muſt enure him to a love of juſtice and truth; the third is to teach him the maſtery over himſelf and his paſſions; and the laſt endeavours to fortify his breaſt with courage and reſolution. Under an abſolute prince thus inſtituted, what ſignifies the power of doing harm, when the will ſhall be wanting? What happineſs may we not reaſonably hope for and promiſe to ourſelves, under a long race of wiſe and equitable

table kings? Such will be indeed the living images of the deity, the faithful diſpenſers of his bounty. Reflect only, how much more conſiſtent it is with the general welfare of ſociety, that a prudent man ſhould be placed at the head of it, than that a lawleſs and giddy multitude ſhould be entruſted with the government. Is it not better they ſhould enjoy freedom and ſecurity through the means of ſuch monarchs, than that the reins of power ſhould be held by themſelves, which will now be unſeaſonably ſtraitned, and now wantonly relaxed in their hands? Do you not find this peculiarly the caſe in Athens? Is not their puniſhment of the beſt in the city, on obſerving the leaſt error in a courſe of the wiſeſt conduct, a flagrant inſtance of the one; and is not their giving into the fooliſh politics and abſurd propoſitions of the worſt, a ridiculous inſtance of the other?

Let us, I beſeech you, bring the compariſon between monarchies and democracies ſtill nearer. The former is allowed on all hands to poſſeſs the greateſt advantages, when it is neceſſary to make a vigorous and ſudden effort of power. A monarch may conceal the ſecret of his deſigns from the knowledge of his enemies; he may deliberate with coolneſs, and act with ſpirit; he may attend ſolely to the reaſon and policy of his meaſures, without being miſled by the falſe gloſſes of his counſellors, without being heated by an orator's addreſs to his paſſions. In republics the caſe is far different; they are ſlow in reſolving, much ſlower in performing; the ſame ſecrecy cannot be preſerved, nor the ſame uniform meaſures purſued; the

voice of reaſon is loſt in the noiſe of eloquence, and reality is baſely diſguiſed by plauſibility. A good monarch is ſenſible, that his own welfare is united with the welfare of his people; he knows the ſecurity of his crown depends on their affection; he will not therefore indulge his miniſters in any ſelfiſh views and inclinations, which may injure the proſperity of himſelf and his kingdom. In popular ſtates little intereſts and private competitions too frequently enter into the publick councils: each man aims at power, riches, and the ruin of his enemies, under the maſk of zeal for his country; and the true intereſt of the many is ſacrificed through their own blindneſs to that of the few. What various opportunities of encouraging the liberal arts, improving the finances, and extending the commerce of his empire, are in the diſpoſal of a monarch? But the miniſters, who preſide in democracies, have no leiſure to regard theſe important particulars; they are obliged to neglect no expedient, however wretched or deteſtable, in order to maintain themſelves in authority. This is their chief buſineſs, and the worthy employment of their adminiſtration. How little then ought we to admire thoſe governments, where the ſpirit of *faction* is miſtaken for the ſpirit of *freedom*; and that, which conſtitutes the real happineſs and grandeur of a nation, is ſurrendered, not for the ſake of liberty, but licentiouſneſs, which is always accompanied with ſedition, and muſt naturally end in deſtruction?

A wiſe king will reſpect the advice of a wiſe council; at the ſame he will be a check over their conduct, and prevent them from caballing together to the oppreſſion

preſſion of their inferiors, or quarrelling with one another to the diſorder and confuſion of the ſtate. To ſpeak plainly, he will convey to his people the advantages of ariſtocracy, without the inconveniencies, which may ſometimes attend it.

Let it be granted there is one dangerous circumſtance in monarchy, I mean, that its corruption is *tyranny*; but let it be remembered, there is one much more dangerous in a republic, I mean, that not only its corruption is *anarchy*, (which every one muſt allow,) but that it is equally expoſed to tyranny. For if tyranny conſiſts in the power and the will to inflict ſtripes, and ſlavery in the neceſſity to receive them when inflicted; then the many may tyrannize over the few, the ſtronger may cruſh the weaker in democracies. In this laſt caſe the tyranny will be much more open and effectual than in the firſt, becauſe a ſingle tyrant will be afraid, leſt he ſhould enflame the reſentment of his people; but a majority of tyrants will be reſtrained by no ſuch prudential conſideration. Under monarchical governments, if the ſubjects find themſelves oppreſſed by their king, deſpair will furniſh them with arms; they will join in the common cauſe, and dethrone him, who has proſtituted the dignity of his office, and forfeited the allegiance of his people. They will then place a worthier in his ſtead; nor need they in the mean time be afraid of invaſions from without, ſince no one would dare to attack a nation united within. But in popular ſtates the few, and conſequently the weaker, after ſeveral unſucceſsful ſtruggles, will perceive they are unable to redreſs their grievances: they will

will therefore aſk the aſſiſtance of foreigners; ſooner than be in bondage to their fellow citizens, they will court the yoke of a ſtranger, and ſubmit their country and themſelves to the mercy of a conqueror.

In an evening conference at Olympia on this ſubject you declared, "no ſimple form of government "could be free from inconveniencies: that one mixed "out of the three ſpecies would ſecure to mankind "the benefits, and correct the diſadvantages ariſing "from each of them." And you told me, that "you had once intimated theſe ſentiments in a letter "to GOBRYAS." What that great ſtateſman might think upon the ſcheme, you could not inform me; for he wiſely and like a ſtateſman concealed it. But art thou not of opinion, my CLEANDER, that a frame of government ſo excellently contrived is rather to be commended in theory, than eſtabliſhed in practice, and may take place in the heads of philoſophers, but not in ſocieties of men? It would be as difficult to ſettle the nice boundaries between liberty and prerogative, as to adjuſt the exact limits between vice and virtue. The preſervation of ſuch a tender and delicate conſtitution muſt depend on that, which would at certain times be unſteady and unequal, namely, the wiſdom of the governors in not extending the powers of either too far. The ſituation of theſe with reſpect to each other would reſemble that of two princes, whoſe territories are contiguous. If the one advances his forces to the frontiers of the other, he gives a juſt and well grounded alarm to his neighbour. In ſhort, to ſuppoſe ſuch a mixture either probable or poſſible, and that it will

ever

ever be admitted and maintained in a nation, is to ſuppoſe mankind a different order of beings from what they are; or that the gracious OROMASDES will one day or other throw a much larger ſhare of reaſon into the ſcale of human nature, than is now laid in the balance, and ſuffer it to weigh down the paſſions.

C.

LETTER XCIII.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES.

ÆSCHYLUS (of whom I ſpoke ſo much to thee in my laſt *) is ſaid to have diſtinguiſhed himſelf in the three battles of Marathon, Salamis, and Platæa. In the ſecond of theſe engagements his younger brother AMYNIAS commanded a ſquadron of ſhips, and had the firſt prize decreed him after the victory. It was to the reputation of this man, that ÆSCHYLUS owed his life. Having been accuſed for ſome bold ſtrokes of impiety in one of his tragedies, the Areopagites were juſt ready to pronounce ſentence. AMYNIAS ſtepped up to the judges in that inſtant, pulled his arm from under his garment, and ſhewed it in the face of the court without a hand, that having been loſt, as he declared, in the ſervice of his country. The merit of the ſoldier gained the immediate acquittal of the poet; and ÆSCHYLUS was aſhamed of being pardoned, not for his own virtue, but the

* Letter LXXXVI.

valour of his brother. A few years after he reſented highly the affront, which had been put on him by the judges of the theatre, in permitting SOPHOCLES, who had been formerly his ſcholar, to carry away the palm in tragedy, at the feſtival, which celebrated the recovery of THESEUS's bones. CIMON gave his ſanction to this determination; and ÆSCHYLUS retired from Athens, after his defeat, to Gela in Sicily; where he arrived, while king HIERO was building the city Ætna. He addreſſed himſelf to his new patrons in a play, which bore the name of that town, and was employed in prophetically deſcribing the future commerce, wealth, and grandeur of the place. As he was walking one day in the fields to refreſh himſelf in the air after the fatigue of a rehearſal, an eagle with a tortoiſe in it's claws accidentally flew over his head, and (as the Sicilians relate it) ſoaring high with her prey, and wanting ſome ſtone whereon to break it, miſtook ÆSCHYLUS's bald crown for a flint, and threw it down upon him in ſuch a manner as daſhed out his brains. THEMISTOCLES had ſuch a regard to his performances, that after the death of ÆSCHYLUS, he contracted with PHRYNICHUS for the repreſentation of ſeveral of them.

In the mean time SOPHOCLES improved his credit over all Greece. He was held in eſteem not only as a tragic writer, but as a counſellor; and the higheſt offices in the ſtate were ſometimes conferred upon him. I have heard him ſpeak of his expedition to Samos in joint commiſſion with PERICLES; but that great general ſaid of him, that in his military capacity

(whatever

(whatever he might be in his poetical) he had more perſonal bravery than conduct. PHILEMON has a good ſtory of his being one day in company with them in the forum, while they continued together in office, and were talking careleſsly on matters of indifference; an handſom virgin paſs'd by them in the middle of the conference. SOPHOCLES took notice of her beauty, and PERICLES reproved him, ſaying, "a magiſtrate ſhould obſerve continence with his eyes as well as his hands." Though he is far advanced in years, he continues to apply himſelf to his profeſſion with an unwearied application. I was myſelf preſent at a very extraordinary trial, not many months ago, in which he was concerned before the court of Areopagus. The ſons of SOPHOCLES deſired the guardianſhip of their father's eſtate, as of one, who was grown delirious, and conſequently no longer able to manage his affairs. The old gentleman ſpoke in his own defenſe with a peculiar vivacity and ſtrength of underſtanding. As ſoon as he had cloſed his oration, which fell from him with an uncommon flow of natural eloquence and grace of pronunciation, he begged leave to read a tragedy, which he had juſt finiſhed, and would ſpeedily offer to the public. It was entitled OEDIPUS at Colonos, and was deſigned to do honour to his native town. He recited it, and then deſired to know, with ſome warmth of temper and quickneſs of expreſſion, whether that piece was the work of a madman or a fool. The judges applauded his wit, diſmiſſed him with the higheſt marks of honour, and actually declared his ſons madmen for accuſing him.

EURIPIDES, another great maſter in the dramatic art, and the rival of ÆSCHYLUS and SOPHOCLES, was brought up by his father to exerciſes of ſtrength and activity, and deſigned for nothing more than a wreſtler in the Olympic games. His inclinations lay another way, and he proved a conſtant diſciple of ANAXAGORAS in philoſophy, and of PRODICUS in rhetoric. Since that he has turned his thoughts to the writing of tragedies, and has one happineſs, which men of parts are generally ſtrangers to, that of being as remarkable for his induſtry as his genius. During the laſt Athenæa I was preſent at his Bellerophon, wherein he hath introduced a wicked man ſeriouſly preferring lucre to honeſty in a train of ſtudied arguments. Though for my own part I was ſtruck with an averſion to the character and the ſentiments, yet I could not think it right to paſs ſentence on the poet, till the cataſtrophe of the piece. The impatient audience however were riſing up with a kind of Bacchanalian fury, to demoliſh both the play and the actor. EURIPIDES came on, and bowed, as if deſirous to ſpeak. His requeſt was granted, and he told us, "he could not "help obſerving, with a ſecret tranſport, the virtue and "integrity of that great aſſembly; and ſhould always "endeavour to follow in his particular capacity the "national example." He added, "that if they would "wait quietly to the end of the tragedy, they would "find he had not failed in expreſſing his abhorrence "for iniquity, ſince the patron of covetouſneſs would "there meet with the puniſhment he deſerved." SOCRATES frequents no plays but thoſe of EURIPIDES.

I ſaw

I ſaw him in a corner of the theatre on this occaſion; and while the ſoliloquy was reciting, his face ſeemed compoſed into a ſettled deteſtation of the odious panegyric; but his features afterwards lighted up again, and he was greatly ſatisfied with the ſpirit and behaviour of his friend EURIPIDES. ARCHELAUS king of Macedon had heard ſo much of this great poet, that he ſent him an invitation to his kingdom. In converſation he told EURIPIDES, "he ſhould be very proud, "if he would compoſe a tragedy in honour of his "character." To which the other replied with great politeneſs, "Pray heaven, your majeſty may never be "the ſubject of a tragedy!" A courtier laughed at him one day for the ſtinking of his breath; "If my "breath ſtinks, replied he, it is becauſe ſo many "honeſt ſecrets have rotted within me."

The general opinion of the Athenians on the excellencies of theſe three competitors ſeems founded in an exact and impartial review of them. ÆSCHYLUS is thought to want neither ſpirit nor ſublimity, but is cenſured as bombaſt and inflated. SOPHOCLES has united the perfections of art to the graces of nature, and has a juſter degree of elevation than his maſter, with more delicacy and ſweetneſs. EURIPIDES is rather fond of elegance and tenderneſs, than ſtrength and grandeur; and has a fine way of interſperſing the reflections of morality, without flattening the dialogue, or relaxing the attention of his audience from the main action.

Comedy had the ſame riſe with tragedy; and though SUSARION and EPICHARMUS are ſaid to have been

the firſt inventors of it, yet EUPOLIS and CRATINUS pretend to a ſhare in the merit. The former was ſeventeen years of age, when he entered on the theatre, and raiſed his credit by abuſing both CIMON and PERICLES; but the latter honoured CIMON, who was at that time the head of the nobility. The libertiniſm of comedy is very freely indulged by the impudent poet ARISTOPHANES; and I dare ſay, his ſcandalous licentiouſneſs will at laſt convince the Athenians of the neceſſity of ſome law to reſtrain it. It may be ſaid however in favour of tragedy and comedy, that each of theſe writings have their reſpective uſe. The fate of tyranny and anarchy are laid open in the one, and the abſurdities and follies of private life are ridiculed in the other.

I find it a queſtion, HYDASPES, diſputed among the critics of Greece, in which of theſe it is hardeſt to excel; at the ſame time it is univerſally acknowledged, that the tragic and comic excellencies are ſo different, that no man can ever be ſuperior in both. Wilt thou indulge me, while I give thee a reaſon or two on the ſide of comedy? The firſt, and moſt natural, which occurs, is, that it is eaſier to raiſe our attention by good ſenſe, than to excite our laughter by wit. The plot of tragedy is already wrought to our hands by the hiſtorian; the plot of comedy is derived from the fancy of the poet. The former is converſant in the grave paſſions of public life, ſuch as avarice, ambition, and ſometimes an heroic love. Theſe are eaſily painted, becauſe great characters are expoſed to the obſervation of all men. The latter chiefly interferes with the workings of the mind in private life, and the little

tle family-intrigues and inconſiſtencies, which occupy ſo conſiderable a ſhare of mankind. Theſe are painted with difficulty, becauſe to gain a thorough knowledge of them requires a very intimate and extenſive acquaintance with the world. Our behaviour in public muſt depend on ſome virtues and vices, which, though differently blended in different conſtitutions, are always the ſame, and have determined ideas annexed to them. Our behaviour in private will depend on the fickleneſs of our temper, our levities and humours, which can never be defined, and are not only various in various perſons, but are hourly jarring and unſettled in the ſame perſon. Theſe levities are the chief ingredients in the compoſition of comedy, as well as they are in that of mankind; and ſo fluttter between vice and virtue, that they are hard to be caught and deſcribed. Tragedy now is carried to a degree of perfection, which leaves me no expectation from poſterity: but comedy, as by far the moſt difficult, will admit of much alteration and improvement. In ſhort then, to hit off the paſſions of comedy with nature and propriety, to bring them home to every man's own buſineſs and boſom, is a taſk reſerved for ſome genius in a future age, ſince I aſſure thee, no one of the preſent is equal to it.

From Athens. C.

LETTER XCIV.

GOBRYAS to CLEANDER. From Ecbatana.

THE account, which thy laſt letters brought of the ſurrender of Mitylene, and the puniſhment inflicted on its inhabitants, afforded us a ſtrong picture of the temper and politics of the Athenians. And by enlivening thy narrative of facts with reflections on the motives of their conduct, and intermixing particulars of their debates and forms of proceeding, thou continueſt to recommend thy diligence and addreſs to the ſupreme council. I believe I have already informed thee, that thy diſpatches are conſtantly regiſtered in the archives of the empire; and if they are preſerved with that care, of which the regular ſeries of our records from the reign of CYRUS is a proof, they will tranſmit to lateſt ages the memory of a very able and faithful miniſter. The king, during the courſe of his glorious reign, has ſhewn his grateful ſenſe of his ſervants merits, by rewarding them with thoſe treaſures, which under former ones have been laviſhed away on the flattering, the ſervile, and the corrupted dependants on courts; and thy next remittances from Teribazus will ſhew thee, that thy allowance is conſiderably augmented. The courier, whom NICANDER ſent to Sparta for further inſtructions, is at laſt returned; the anſwer he has brought to our propoſals, is drawn up with the true Laconic ſtatelineſs and brevity.

The

The King, Senate, and Ephori of Sparta to ARTAXERXES, King of Perſia, health.

WE ſeek thy alliance not unwillingly; but can do nothing to obtain it, which will diſhonour our country in the eyes of Greece. Farewel.

I treated the agent NICANDER with great reſerve on this occaſion, and only expreſſed my ſurprize, that his republic could think it equitable, that the whole hazard and expence of aſſiſting them ſhould lie on our ſide, whilſt they were tied down to no particular ſtipulations in favour of Perſia. In the courſe of the conference I found he endeavoured to diſcover, if we were inclined to aſſiſt his ſtate with a ſum of money, on condition it ſhould be repaid with intereſt in four years. But I told him plainly (as I was ordered) that I looked upon our negotiation as entirely at an end; and that it was indifferent to the king, whether he continued here or departed. I have not ſeen NICANDER ſince this converſation, but I do not hear, he deſigns yet to leave us. I agree entirely, CLEANDER, with thy opinion, that 'tis ill ſucceſs alone, which muſt lengthen the monoſyllables of Lacedemon. From the intelligence, which thou ſenteſt me concerning PYTHON, I took hold of an opportunity he gave me of entring into ſome diſcourſe with him. He made an application to me in behalf of a correſpondent of his, an Athenian merchant reſiding at Sidon, who had been impriſoned by the governor for refuſing to ſubmit to an extraordinary

nary tax, which had been laid on all foreign commodities. I aſſured him, it had been levied without the leaſt authority from hence; and that the king would diſclaim the proceeding of his governor, by ſending him immediate orders, not only to releaſe the merchant, and repair the damages he had ſuſtained, but to repeal the impoſition. I hinted however to PYTHON, that it was inconvenient for the Athenians, not to have an ambaſſador here to complain of ſuch violences, whenever they happened, and to take care of the intereſts of the republic at this critical juncture, when they could not be ignorant, that the Lacedemonians ſhewed a diſpoſition to cultivate an alliance with us to their prejudice. PYTHON appeared very attentive to my diſcourſe, and told me, that he would not fail to inform his correſpondent of the relief he had obtained from the king's juſtice; and that he did not doubt, it would give great ſatisfaction at Athens.

When thy laſt letters were read before the council of Seven, they renewed a diviſion, which has for ſome time prevailed amongſt them, and ſpread generally through the empire, viz. whether Perſia ſhould immediately take part in the Peloponneſian war. Some are eager to revenge on one part of the Greeks that diſgrace, which they ſuffered from the whole body of them at Salamis and Platea. Others think the empire not ſufficiently recovered from thoſe deep wounds, and are willing to take time for conſidering, which part of the Greeks it will be our intereſt to ſupport. The younger counſellors and the military men declare for the firſt opinion; and as they have formed an high idea

of

of the Spartan bravery, incline to their intereſt. The wiſeſt and moſt experienced ſatraps, and even thoſe among our officers, who have grown old in the ſervice, adviſe us to purſue the latter ſcheme. The worſt is, that he, whom both his abilities and integrity render the fitteſt to direct our counſels, I mean MEGABYZUS, declines more and more in his health; the conſumptive ſtate of body, under which he has laboured for two years, grows daily upon him. No air ſuits him but that of the foreſt of Niſa; and I believe he will be unable to attend the court in their removal to Suſa.

I know not, if thou haſt yet been acquainted with the remarkable events, which have fallen out within the compaſs of a few months in the northern provinces. Several complaints having been ſent up againſt ARIAZUS, the governor of Sogdiana, he was ordered to repair to court forthwith to juſtify his conduct. Inſtead of complying, he pretended at firſt, that ſickneſs prevented his taking ſo long a journey; but that he hoped, the reply he made in writing to the accuſations of his enemies would be a ſufficient apology for his behaviour. His defence was found to be ſo evaſive and trifling, that a ſecond order was ſent him by an Aſtanda, to ſet out within a day after the receipt of it, if he would not be reckoned a criminal; and at the ſame time OCHUS's lieutenant in Bactria, SPITAMENES, was commanded to draw together a body of troops towards the frontiers of Sogdiana. ARIAZUS ſoon diſcovered his criminal intentions; he impriſoned the Aſtanda, ſeized the revenues of the province, entred

into

into a correſpondence with OXYATHRES, who had taken refuge at the Scythian court, and broke out into an open revolt. By the perſuaſions of the latter, TAXILAS the Scythian king was prevailed upon to ſend to the aſſiſtance of ARIAZUS a body of thirty thouſand men, who croſſed the Tanais, and joined him at Gaza. The laws of nations were violated, and our ambaſſador ARSANES put under arreſt for remonſtrating ſtrongly againſt this open infraction of treaties. SPITAMENES, without ſtaying for the reinforcements, which the governors of Parthia and Hyrcania were preparing to ſend him, ventured a battle near Cyropolis. He put himſelf at the head of his troops, and puſhed the van of the rebels very vigorouſly; but receiving a mortal wound from a Scythian bow in the beginning of the engagement, his troops were defeated, and obliged to repaſs the Oxus. Affairs on this ſide put on for ſome time a bad aſpect; but the over-ruling OROMASDES would not ſuffer the reign of our Great Monarch to be long ſullied with the proſperity of a rebel. For the Scythian king being killed by a fall from his horſe, as he was hunting, his ſon CLEOPHAS, who ſucceeded him, not only releaſed our ambaſſador, and recalled his forces, but aſſured us, in the ſtrongeſt terms, of his reſolution to adhere ſtrictly to his alliances with Perſia, and that in purſuance of them he had ordered OXYATHRES to depart his country. To deal freely with thee, this ſudden turn proceeds not ſo much from the natural diſpoſition of the young prince, as the influence of his favourite ARGASPES, who has felt the effect of our maſter's

maſter's liberality. ARIAZUS's army, diſcouraged by the retreat of the Scythian forces, mutinied againſt him; and BESSUS, one of his officers, had the boldneſs to aſſaſſinate him, as he was ſleeping in his tent, and ſent up his head to court.

I have now performed the duty of a miniſter, in laying before thee the preſent ſtate of our affairs; but I ſhould ill diſcharge the offices of a friend, if I did not aſſure thee of the continuance of my regard for thee by a ſmall preſent of oriental curioſities, which the next ſhip will bring thee from Epheſus.

Thou mayſt likewiſe be ſatisfied, that whenever thou art tired of thy hazardous employment, I will exert my utmoſt endeavours to procure thee a ſecure and honourable eſtabliſhment in Perſia. Adieu.

P.

LETTER XCV.

CLEANDER to ORSAMES. From Athens.

HOW agreeably do your letters, moſt noble ORSAMES, lead my imagination through all the mazes of Egyptian learning! How awful is the form of ſcience concealed beneath the veil of ſacred rites! But how rational is the delight ſhe gives us, when diveſted of her hieroglyphic dreſs, and ſtript of that diſguiſe, which gains her the veneration of the ignorant and admiring multitude! Upon this principle, the Eleuſinian myſteries are calculated to inſpire a reverential curioſity, which makes the mind more deeply attentive

attentive to thoſe truths, the knowledge of which it has with much difficulty attained. But why do I talk of truths, when all I can tell you is of outward ſhews? For I have not been admitted myſelf to a participation of theſe ceremonies; and yet methinks, if I am not widely miſtaken in my gueſs, whoever is an hearer of the divine SOCRATES cannot be entirely ignorant of the doctrines taught in them, though he himſelf has hitherto refuted the initiation even to his diſcredit; perhaps to avoid a more dangerous ſuſpicion of diſcovering out of treachery, what he has already learnt by the inſpiration of an excellent nature. But of this hereafter. I imagine you will not be diſpleaſed with a particular account of the external ceremonies, of which I have lately been a ſpectator. They begin on the fifteenth of the month Βοηδρομιών, by a general aſſembly of the candidates for initiation, who on the ſecond purify themſelves in the ſea, and are employed on the third in offering ſacrifices of little pomp, and therefore not worth deſcribing. The fourth day is diſtinguiſhed by a ſolemn proceſſion, in which the holy baſket of CERES is carried in a conſecrated car, drawn by four milk white oxen, whoſe necks and horns are wreathed with garlands of corn and poppies. They paſs along amidſt the acclamations of the multitude, who reſound the praiſes of CERES; and are followed by a train of beautiful young women, repreſenting the companions of PROSERPINE. Their garments are gayly embroidered with all ſorts of wild flowers; and on their heads they bear the myſtic baſkets, which are concealed from every eye beneath long veils

of

of purple. "Yet however your curioſity may be ex-"cited by this concealment, ſaid the young ALCIBIA-"DES to me, believe me, who am an initiate, the "veils cover nothing half ſo much worth ſeeing, as "thoſe faces, to which they give a becoming ſhade." On the fifth evening is commemorated the ſearch of PROSERPINE, when CERES ſnatching with a torch the flames of Ætna, ran with uncertain ſteps to ſeek her daughter. The air is illuminated with the blaze of ten thouſand torches, and great is the conteſt, who ſhall conſecrate the largeſt to the ſervice of the goddeſs. The moſt remarkable of all the ceremonies was that of the ſixth day, when the ſtatue of IACCHUS the ſon of JUPITER and CERES is carried in proceſſion from Athens to Eleuſis. It ſets out from the Ceramicus, and is accompanied with muſic, ſongs, and ſymphonies of ſounding braſs, to which the dancers feet keep time, who as well as the ſtatue are crowned with myrtle garlands. Thus they uſed to paſs in feſtive pomp along the way from thence called ſacred, and after reſting twice enter Eleuſis by the myſtic gate; but ever ſince the beginning of the war they have been forced to conduct their proceſſion by water. The ſea is almoſt covered with the multitudes of ſhining veſſels, which are ready to convey the joyful crowds, who are received at Eleuſis in a magnificent temple, capable of containing with eaſe more than thirty thouſand perſons. The loud notes of the trumpets and clarions are reflected with a ſofter echo from the waves; and with theſe the ſacred bards join hymns of praiſe to CERES, PROSERPINE, and IACCHUS. The dancers with a nim-

blé bound ſkip from one bark to another, and with a thouſand antic geſtures expreſs their mimic raptures. I followed in the crowd of boats with SOCRATES and ALCIBIADES. Of the three remaining days that precede the initiation, the firſt is paſt in games, wherein the victors are rewarded with a meaſure of barley, that grain being firſt ſown in Eleuſis; the next in admitting perſons to the initiation of the leſſer myſteries; and the laſt is called Plemochoai, from a libation made out of two earthen veſſels placed towards the eaſt and weſt, which after the repetition of certain words are thrown down, and their wine ſpilt upon the earth. And here what are properly called the myſteries begin: the happy initiates are conducted by the hierophant, who has attended them through all the ceremonies from the very firſt day, into the temple of CERES, and the impenetrable gates of ſecrecy are ſhut againſt the profane. For a ſtranger, though but by accident, to be preſent at theſe ſecret rites, is inevitable death; for an initiate to reveal them, death with infamy. Thus far however may be innocently known of them, that beſides the hierophant, whoſe buſineſs through life it is to preſide at them, they are attended by five public officers, the chief of whom is one of the archons, bears the title of king, and the day following the myſteries has the care of aſſembling the ſenate, to take notice of any irregularities, that have been committed there. The other four are choſen by the people, and called curators. The hierophant or myſtagogue has alſo three aſſiſtants of an higher and ten of a lower rank, who are chiefly employed about

the ſacrifices. Beyond this we know little but from conjecture; but thus much all the conjectures that I have ever heard, agree in, that the ſecret of theſe myſteries cannot conſiſt in ſhews alone, in viſions, in frightful noiſes, and appearances, calculated to aſtoniſh women and children indeed, but little capable of anſwering the raiſed expectations of the brave and wiſe, who all are ambitious of being admitted to them. Even in the leſſer myſteries many doctrines are inculcated of the higheſt importance, and conducive to virtue; yet theſe are but a preparation for the greater, and to them no one is admitted, whoſe character is blemiſhed with any crime. On this initiation are ſuppoſed to depend the favour of the gods and the happineſs of a future ſtate. Shall we ſuppoſe then, that this degree of happineſs and merit is attained by merely beholding a number of ſtrange ceremonies, by attending to the ſounds of ſolemn muſic, by being in a blaze of light, and on a ſudden in total darkneſs, by anſwering a few queſtions of courſe aſked by the hierophant about their previous preparations? Or is it by liſtening to a ſacred doctrine, that ſhall unfold the ſublimeſt truths of religion, by clearing from their minds the miſts of vulgar prejudice, and forming in them juſt notions of the deity, the one ſupreme director of the world, ſuch as he is adored in Perſia, ſuch as he is taught in the more public Cretan myſteries, whence that people pretend theſe and all others to be derived. Such doctrines as theſe are thought to require the cloſeſt ſecrecy, as being too oppoſite to a uſeful popular belief. Such doctrines as theſe deſerve indeed the pomp, with which

theſe myſteries are introduced, as thoſe of all other the moſt venerable, as thoſe of all others the moſt important, as thoſe, which alone can open the mind to true knowledge, and give a juſt and conſtant principle of action. Whether this be the myſtery revealed to the initiates or not, let us rejoice, who are in poſſeſſion of ſuch valuable knowledge; and if we conduct our lives in a manner ſuitable to it, we need not be perplexed by thoſe fears, with which many are terrified into the initiation, that merely wanting the name of initiates ſhall condemn us to eternal wretchedneſs; or indeed that thoſe, who have only the name of it, ſhall claim any ſuperiority over us in the juſt determinations of a future ſtate. Farewel.

T.

LETTER XCVI.

SMERDIS to CLEANDER.

OROMASDES has eſtabliſhed the throne of Perſia to maintain our religion above the contempt and inſolences of idolaters, who do not like the complexion of our barbarous and inhoſpitable faith, which, ſay they, excludes the gods themſelves from our cities, and denies them an habitation amongſt us.

Should Perſia yield to a foreign maſter, the peculiarity of our religion would add weight to our chains; as the wretched Jews meet with little compaſſion, and are thought not ſufficiently humbled, while they refuſe to comply with the worſhip of their conquerors. This people are well known in the eaſt for their ſufferings and

and inflexible adherence to their religions; for what kingdom has not numerous families of them, the marks of their ancient bondage? Though they are ſo induſtrious to reinſtate their nation, like a trunk torn up by the violence of a hurricane, in its parent ſoil, it thrives but a while, and extends its branches only to be lopped and ſcattered by the ſword of a new maſter. The holieſt of the Magi does not more reverently admit the divine preſence amongſt them, than this people, which they do not preſume to circumſcribe by the works of their own hands, nor venture to repreſent any otherwiſe than by a dazzling glory, an inacceſſible brightneſs, which they aſſert ſome time to have been given as a ſenſible mark of the Deity's preſence; but that the moſt intimate knowledge of God is the divine irradition upon the minds of prophets and holy men. They are perſuaded of the exiſtence of ſome evil genii, which are at leaſt coeval with the world, and the dangerous enemies of mankind. They think it no ſtain to marry amongſt their own kindred; and they honour a prophet as the meſſenger of heaven. The ſimilitude, which all this bears to the wiſdom of the Magi, is the reaſon the Jews find their condition very tolerable under a Perſian yoke. CYRUS himſelf, when he reduced the pride of Babylon, treated them favourably, becauſe he found them retaining ſuch venerable doctrines. XERXES burnt the temples of Greece, but permitted them to rebuild their places of worſhip. Certainly, CLEANDER, pure religion was once univerſal; and mankind received truth from the ſame ſource, whence they derived their being. For this

ancient people maintain many uncorrupted traditions, which no change of fortune has ever been able to extort from them. ZADOC is one of theſe, a perſon of no mean credit at the court. Upon aſking him, on what grounds his countrymen juſtify'd their tenacious regard for their religious rites; becauſe, ſaid he, they were divinely communicated; and (what is much more difficult to ſupport without evidence,) heaven has not altogether broke off the intercourſe with us, but at certain periods honours ſome holy man with the knowledge of its will, who firſt gains our credit by ſome notable inſtance of power, and then confirms us in our religion. Our princes hear his rebukes with decency, and ſubmit to his commands with meekneſs. They do not profeſs to make war nor conclude peace by their own ſtrength or counſel, nor dare they aſſume the honours of ſucceſs; they are but ſecond in the ſtate, for God is the ſovereign. So long as we acknowledge this, we have a conſtant and happy teſtimony of the truth of it; our ſeaſons are ever temperate, our flocks multiply, our vintage never fails, ſucceſs attends our arms, and our princes rule with wiſdom. ZADOC, ſaid I, you forget yourſelf, and your fancy carries you back to thoſe early times, when man's innocence fitted him for the converſe of heavenly genii, who were the vicegerents of God, and openly interpoſed in the adminiſtration of human affairs. But there are now no footſteps in the world of that happy ſtate, and the miſerable viciſſitudes of your nation leave the leaſt room for expecting to find any there. I do not, replied he, pretend to exempt our nation from the ills

of life; no, we are liable to the greateſt; for obſerve the equality of providence, which proportions our duty to our advantages. We are enjoined an hard taſk for our high privileges, no leſs than humility in the enjoyment of them; a conſtant acknowledgment of a precarious dependance, when we ſeem to be above the ſtroke of adverſity. As God is the diſpoſer of our affairs, he will not permit the aid and devices of men to ſhare in the honour. We are forbid therefore to think ourſelves at all acceſſary to our happineſs, either by induſtry in peace, or conduct and proweſs in the field. To reckon up the national forces, and keep exact liſts of the ſoldiery, is laudable œconomy in other ſtates: in us it were a criminal oſtentation, and reliance on human aid, (which we profeſs not to confide in) and has ſometimes been followed by a national calamity. Much leſs ſhould we be tolerated in a defection from the divine worſhip, or the vile indignity of ſetting up an idol in our hearts, as his competitor, who has no equal, and will bear no compariſon; who calls himſelf jealous of a rival, a term not more affectionate than terrible to his worſhippers.

Now, continued he, you ſee the tenure of our happineſs, and will ceaſe to wonder at our frequent fall from it, ſince it depends on the ſteadineſs of the human mind, and our perſeverance in a national fidelity. Alas! peace and affluence eaſily corrupt the heart, and introduce an inſenſibility of dependance. We, like other nations, ſoon boaſt of our atchievements, ſtrengthen ourſelves with allies, court foreign marriages (which are forbidden by the law) and in com-

placence to our new alliances, agree with thoſe nations in their forms of worſhip. Theſe are the gates, that let in plague, famine, and ſlavery upon us, and render us the ſcorn of nations, who upbraid us with not having a knowledge of the true God, or (what is indeed the caſe) not having virtue enough to deſerve his protection. ZADOC, ſaid I, you ſurprize me much in accuſing your nation of levity in religious duties, ſince you are known to offend in the other extreme; and will not even in captivity be prevailed upon to neglect thoſe ceremonies, which render you obnoxious. You ſay true, replied he, for captivity renders the mind ſober and conſiderate, and the moſt cruel tyrant is often unable to extort an unworthy confeſſion from us. But ſurely you are not at a loſs to find the difficulty there is in making ſo nice a duty, as is required of us, compatible with the wantonneſs of proſperity. The ways of providence, ſaid I, are not to be pronounced upon with peremptorineſs. I will not pretend to ſay, that its dealings are the ſame with all nations; but is it poſſible, that truths of importance ſhould be confined in the cuſtody of an obſcure people, within the bounds of Paleſtine? We are not, returned he, an obſcure people; our very misfortunes have prevented that; or if we were, perhaps obſcurity and privacy may be leſs corrupt guardians to treaſures of this kind than the refined polities of large empires. Deſpiſe not our weakneſs, SMERDIS; like private men, ſtates have their viciſſitudes; we are ſtill a diſtinct people, and are continued (ſo we preſume) for greater ends than the preſent meanneſs of our condition promiſes. Great

princes

princes have ſat on the throne of Paleſtine, and a greater ſtill may ariſe, who, like your CYRUS, ſhall vanquiſh the nations of the earth with irreſiſtible controul, and retrieve the honours of an ancient people, who can not only fairly trace their anceſtry up to thoſe holy patriarchs, whom heaven deſigned to ſpare at the general flood; but paſs that common boundary to the annals of other nations, and deduce our origin from the common father of the human race.

Our diſcourſe was much longer; and ZADOC's honeſt zeal for his religion and nation accompanied him through the whole, conducted not without ſome appearance of reaſon, but not ſo much but that I ſaid to myſelf at parting, Good heaven! what a bleſſing is hope, which is ſo hard to be extinguiſhed in the human breaſt! It is a ſpark, that lives, where there appears no fuel for its ſupport. This people in ſlavery keep proſperity in view, and (by what I can diſcern) indulge their imagination with victories to come, and an extended empire in diſtant ages.

From Balch. H.

LETTER XCVII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. From Athens.

THE ſuperiority of the Athenian naval force, if rightly managed, muſt turn the balance of war in their favour, as (not to put thee in mind of other inſtances) ſufficiently appears from the iſſue of the Corcyrean troubles. The conteſts between the Ariſtocratical

ſtocratical and Democratical factions there roſe to ſuch a height, that much blood was ſpilt during the violence of the tumults, in which the people had for the moſt part the advantage. The party of Oligarchiſts being apprehenſive, that their enemies would take poſſeſſion of ſome poſts very incommodious for them, in a fit of rage and deſpair ſet fire to the buildings round the forum and harbour. Great quantities of merchandize and other rich effects were conſumed in the flames, which ſpread ſo wide, that if the wind had not been contrary, the whole city muſt have been burnt to the ground. The day after this diſorder NICOSTRATUS arrived with the Athenian ſquadron from Naupactus, and ſoon compoſed matters to the advantage of his party. The others were diſarmed, obliged to deliver up hoſtages, and four hundred of the chief amongſt them confined in the temple of JUNO. Within four or five days after the Peloponneſian fleet, conſiſting of fifty ſail, commanded by ALCIDAS and BRASIDAS, came in ſight of the iſland. The united ſquadrons of the Corcyreans and Athenians went out to meet them, and began an engagement, which laſted till night. The former, who had a diviſion amongſt their ſeamen, and brought up but few gallies to fight at a time, were put in great diſorder; but the latter behaved with ſuch gallantry, that though they had only 12 ſhips, they ſunk one of the enemy's, and ſecured the retreat of the Corcyreans. The confuſion was ſo great within the city, that had the Peloponneſians followed the advice of BRASIDAS, and attacked it directly, they would in all probability have been maſters

of it before morning; but they contented themſelves with landing troops, and ravaging the country. This gave the Corcyreans time to recover from their ſurpriſe, and take the proper precautions with regard to the Ariſtocratical party, who meditated a ſecond riſing. The arrival of an Athenian fleet of ſixty ſail obliged ALCIDAS to reimbark, and retire into port with no ſmall precipitation, leaving the ſea open to the enemy. The Corcyreans, elated with theſe powerful ſuccours, were determined to take a complete revenge upon the adverſe party, and proceeded againſt them with the moſt bloody and mercileſs ſeverities, inſomuch that in the ſpace of ſeven days they extirpated almoſt all the Ariſtocratical faction. Fifty of the richeſt citizens were put to death, according to the forms of law. The others were privately aſſaſſinated by their creditors, or murdered at the altars, whither they fled for refuge. A large number of theſe unfortunate men, it is ſaid, were ſhut up and ſtarved in the temple of BACCHUS. This is the concluſion, noble ſcribe, of the Corcyrean ſedition, which for the time it laſted was as violent as any recorded in hiſtory. It is obſerved to have been the firſt, which has broke out in this war, founded on the different principles of the Athenian and Lacedemonian governments; but from the animoſities, which the cruelty, wherewith it hath been carried on, muſt occaſion through all the Grecian ſtates, it is conjectured, that it will not be the laſt. The Athenians triumph greatly in their good fortune, and ſay the Peloponneſians have behaved in this affair with that irreſolution and inexperience, which accompany

pany all their naval operations. They imagine, that the ſucceſs, with which in the ſame year they have quelled the revolt of two conſiderable iſlands, ſecures to them the fidelity of their allies, whom ſuch ſtriking inſtances muſt convince, that the Lacedemonian power cannot yet protect them from the weight of Athenian reſentment. The grave and pious, with whom I converſe, find their joy greatly abated on this occaſion by the fatal conſequences, which they apprehend from theſe unhappy diviſions, as a general diſregard to public faith, and a total ſubverſion of humanity and religion in the intercourſe between the Grecian ſtates.

The Athenians have this day decreed an aſſiſtance of twenty gallies to the Leontines, a people of Sicily of Ionian extract, who are at war with the Syracuſians. The chief of the Leontine embaſſy is GORGIAS, a celebrated orator, whoſe eloquence has had great weight in the aſſemblies. It is of a new and peculiar kind, abounding in frequent flouriſhes of fancy, and metaphorical alluſions. He has many admirers here. For my own part, I think the ſtyle of his orations is rather ſtiff and affected, than perſuaſive and elegant, and owes its chief graces to novelty. GORGIAS, beſides acquiring the reputation of an able negotiator, has conſiderably improved his fortunes by his Athenian embaſſy. The whole city reſort to hear his rhetorical lectures, and he receives as a gratuity from every diſciple, who attends them, no leſs than an hundred minæ. Though the Athenians in the decree pretend, that their ancient alliance and relation to the Leon-

tines are the reaſons, which induce them to ſend theſe ſuccours, thou mayſt eaſily imagine they are not the principal ones. The real intentions of this ſtate are to prevent the ſupplies of corn, which their enemies receive from Sicily, and by degrees to get footing there. I know very well, that the fertility and riches of the iſland, it's command of the ſeas, and the ſhort paſſage from thence to Italy have long rendered it the object of ambition to the moſt enterprizing politicians. During the adminiſtration of PERICLES there were ſchemes formed to ſeize upon ſome part of Sicily; but that great miniſter always diſcouraged them, and told thoſe, who adviſed it, that the republic was not powerful enough to undertake an expedition, which beſides it's own difficulties would infallibly draw upon them the arms of all Greece.

The preſent rulers, bolder but leſs prudent than PERICLES, have not (as far as I can learn) laid theſe views aſide, and therefore gladly embrace the opportunity, with which the Leontines furniſh them, to introduce Athenian forces into Sicily.

Thy converſation with PYTHON, noble ſcribe, was extremely well timed; and the relief, which the juſtice of our monarch afforded to the merchants at Sidon, has given very favourable impreſſions of the Perſian court. They talk of ſending thither an embaſſy of ſome of their principal citizens. In the mean time a commiſſion has been diſpatched to PYTHON to manage their affairs with the Great King, as an agent from Athens. Adieu. P.

LETTER

LETTER XCVIII.

OTANES, chief architect and ſuperintendant of the royal palaces, to CLEANDER.

I HAVE ſeen thy curioſities in the palace of MEGABYZUS, which he has ſo ranged in his ſplendid apartments, as to ſhew at once his taſte and value for them. I am perſuaded, that an affectation of this ſort of ſcience, as it is pretty general in Athens, inſtead of adding ornaments to ſociety, muſt fill it with ridiculous characters. For if I underſtand thy ingenious comment upon thoſe pieces of art, to judge of ſculpture and painting, and be pleas'd with them on good grounds, a man ſhould be acquainted with nature and the paſſions; ſhould know how a baſe, an honeſt, or a great mind would actuate the body in different circumſtances; in ſhort, ſhould be both an abſtract moraliſt, and a practical obſerver of human life. I do not wonder, that thou, CLEANDER, ſhouldſt add this to the number of thy accompliſhments; but I think few have the previous qualifications for it.

In return for my entertainment, I will acquaint thee with ſome natural curioſities, which have lately engaged the attention of the Magi. One of them, PATIZITHES by name, has been at great pains in the collection, and has formed an extraordinary hypotheſis thereon. He thinks, he is hereby enabled to prove not only the ancient deluge, but other revolutions in the earth

earth of a more permanent effect. This collection is lodged in a neat room, at one end of the ſchools of juſtice, where the ſons of the Magi hold their daily diſputes. Upon my entrance PATIZITHES opened the drawers of his cabinets, and expoſed to view great number of ſea-ſhells of ſuch variety, as are ſcarce to be ſeen on the ſtrand, when a furious tide has driven them from the bed of the ocean. My attention was raiſed by the ſight, when PATIZITHES begun, ſaying, All nations have ſome tradition of a terrible flood, which deform'd the face of the earth, and brought ſuch deſolation upon our race, as to leave but a ſingle family to repeople it. This was the great triumph of ARIMANIUS; he thought, when he was permitted to confound the elements, to mix air, earth, and water, and extinguiſh every ſpark of terreſtrial fire; that he had renewed chaos and his ancient dominion over nature. But he ſoon ſaw order reſtored; and now no footſteps remain of that hideous devaſtation, but ſuch as you ſee before you, a ſufficient monument indeed of it's truth to all future ages. Theſe ſhells were gathered from different countries far from the ſea; ſome of them formed parts of a rock; others were incloſed in a leſs denſe coherent matter; ſome were near the ſummit of mountains; others many fathoms below the ſurface of the vales. The flat country of Babylonia and Egypt, the rocks of Arabia and Perſia, and that chain of hills, which runs from the Tanais toward the Caſpian ſea, contributed to enrich theſe cabinets. But, ſaid I, there is room to doubt of their antiquity; for how could things of ſo periſhable a nature be preſerved through ſo many

ages?

ages? Becauſe, ſaid PATIZITHES, they have been incloſed in the bowels of the earth, and were better guarded againſt the effects of time than the bodies of the ancient Egyptians in a caſe of aſphaltus. Here, ſays he, obſerve that ſhell, which ſo nearly reſembles a cone; it was lately found on breaking a piece of marble, which made part of a great pyramid in the lake Mœris. Which therefore do you judge to be of greater antiquity, that ancient pyramid, or the ſhell you have in your hands? Doubtleſs, ſaid I, you'll ſay the ſhell, becauſe the materials muſt be older than the building. But, continued I, do you then ſuppoſe this ſhell to be coeval with the rocks? Not only ſo, ſays he, but prior to them, as I will ſatisfy you immediately. Upon which he broke the ſhell, and continued his lecture in the following manner. The contents, ſaid he, you ſee are a piece of Egyptian marble: now if you pleaſe to compare the marble with the ſhell it's caſe, you find they exactly tally. No ſculptor on earth could ſo nicely have fitted the protuberances of one to the cavities of the other. There is an exact ſimilitude in the lines of each, though almoſt numberleſs, and ſome of them ſcarce diſcernible to the eye. This ſtone therefore, which is now ſo firm and ſolid, was once not ſo, but in a fluid ſtate, and received it's impreſſion from the ſhell. I am ſatisfied, ſaid I, this cannot be the effect of art: but the notion of fluidity and the parts of a rock ſeem to be at a great diſtance; and I would rather continue in ſuſpence, than ſit down with ſuch an hypotheſis. There is greater difficulty in ſuppoſing this

than

than the thing you would prove by it. I can more eaſily believe there has been a deluge, than that it ſhould be able to ſoften rocks, and bring them to a ſtate of diſſolution; which is what you ſeem to aim at. Have patience, ſays he, and I will be more explicit on the ſubject. You know, that ſome of the ancient pillars and obeliſks at Thebes, Memphis, and Babylon, are thought by the judicious to be nothing more than a cement or compoſition, becauſe no quarry can be found, that bears any reſemblance to them; and our modern builders have variety of ſuch cements, as from a fluid ſtate come to a firm conſiſtency, when the ſuperfluous moiſture is carried off by the warm air and ſun. Now why ſhould we deny the ſame privilege to nature? When the mighty flood ſwept over the face of the earth, and ploughed up the looſe ſoil, the mouldring clays, and chalks, and infinite variety of materials; the ancient rocks were waſhed at their very roots, their foundations were opened; and (as a rocky promontory undermined by the ſea breaks off from the continent, and is ſunk for ever in the abyſs) having no ſtedfaſtneſs they reel'd from their places, and their weight bore them towards the centre, where they lie for ever beyond the reach of adventrous mortals. The blended materials thrown up in promiſcuous heaps by the waves covered them; and as the waters ſubſided, cemented together more cloſely; and as the parts were nearer akin, they cohered, and form'd bodies of different firmneſs and ſolidity. I do not therefore require of you to believe, that the ancient rocks and compact bodies were diſ-

ſolved,

ſolved, but that many new ones were formed by the deluge, which had incloſed the ſpoils of the ſea within them. If you can admit this account, you will eaſily find a ſolution for every thing that lies before you; if not, they are attended with inſuperable difficulties. What other rational account will you give of that ſhell of a nautilus, which was found buried in a ſtratum of a piceous ſubſtance below the bed of the river Arbis, when ARTAXERXES commanded a bridge to be built over it? Or thoſe teeth and part of the jaw-bone of a monſtrous ſhark, which were dug from the ſame quarry, that ſupplied the eunuch BAGORAZES in building his magnificent palace? This large drawer is filled with curioſities from a bed of chalk fifty cubits below the ſurface of the earth. Theſe ſmall chalky maſſes are full of the little bones and teeth of fiſhes, and many ſhells of the moſt delicate texture, and great variety of ſhape and colour; for neither the form nor colour is injured by the ſoftneſs of the ſtratum they fortunately fell into. I was much pleaſed with the ſight of theſe, and begun to handle them too roughly, as I perceived by my friend's countenance, who turned as pale, as if I had defiled the elements. Upon which I reſtrained my curioſity within the bounds agreeable to him. He next bid me obſerve ſome ſtones, which retained impreſſions from fiſhes, which, ſays he, have long ſince been waſted away, becauſe of their tender ſubſtance; but the impreſſions remain not only of the head, fins, and tail, but the very ſcales; and in ſome you may perceive a gloſſy gold colour received from the body of the fiſh. Here is one ſo entire, you may diſtinguiſh it to be a river perch.

Pray,

Pray, ſaid I, in this general confuſion, which you ſuppoſe, might one not expect to find ſome products of the land as well as the ſea preſerved in the ſtrata of the earth? Yes, replied he, there are ſome horns of deer, that were found in a moraſs at a very conſiderable depth. Here is a beak of the Egyptian ichneumon, and ſome teeth of monkeys, now no where but in Æthiopia, which were found in the heart of a mountain near the Araxes; and all thoſe nuts and almonds, which you ſee, were dug from under the roots of ancient cedars in mount Libanus, when the Tyrians expected to find rich mines in its bowels. Thoſe ſhattered and decayed bones were gathered from different depths of the earth, where it had never before been opened. Here, ſays he, are ſome maſſes of a very compact marble, but only uſed in covering houſes, becauſe upon a ſtroke it is apt to ſhiver into thin plates; for many vegetables were buried in the ſtratum, and prevented its cementing ſo cloſely in thoſe parts. Upon which he ſplit it very dextrouſly, and now, ſays he, you may ſee the broad leaves of the Egyptian papyrus lying flat, and parallel one to another, as you may have obſerved them after the Nile is abated, and has left thoſe plants clogged with mud, and all inclining the ſame way with the direction of the ſtream. I could ſhew you many maſſes, that are filled with fern, the common produce of dry and barren grounds; ſome with myrtle, box, and many other vegetables. But pray take notice of two pieces of iron ſtone, each about a foot ſquare, and of a flat ſurface: a ſort of

net work is deeply impreſs'd on the whole ſurface of one, on the other the ſame work is in a ſort of relief; they differ no otherwiſe than the ſeal and the wax, for they once adhered together in the ſame maſs. I took up a ſtone, which ſeem'd unworthy a place in his cabinets, and obſerv'd to him, that it was uſed in the moſt ordinary buildings. You are right, replied he, there is no commoner material; and the more I wonder it has not been taken notice of, for it is made up almoſt entirely of ſmall ſhells. Place it in a convenient light, and you will ſee them of a thouſand different ſhapes. The buildings of Suſa, and, I doubt not, all the cities of the world are full of the exuviæ of fiſhes. This is no extravagant thing to ſay, if we conſider the vaſt ſhoals, that muſt have been poured out of the boſom of the deep, which not only contains the ſhells of the preſent race, but probably thoſe of ſeveral preceding ages, ſince they ſeem not to be of a very periſhable nature. I will add a piece of advice to thee, OTANES, who art employed by ARTAXERXES in raiſing monuments to his honour, that, when thou buildeſt for poſterity, thou chuſe the moſt ſimple materials; for the veins and colouring of marbles are chiefly owing to vegetables and the exuviæ of animals interſperſed in the original ſtrata, or ſome mixture of heterogeneous bodies, which ſeldom cement well together, and therefore yield ſooner to the attacks of time. I thanked PATIZITHES for his advice, and the new ſcene he had opened to me. I told him, I was not one of thoſe, who doubted the reality

of

of a deluge; but I did not imagine nature would have ſupplied any arguments for it: ſhe exhibits every where beauty and order, but is cautious of ſhewing her deformities. Thou, my friend, haſt penetrated into her arcana, and bringeſt to light what ſhe would have concealed. Thou diſcovereſt how ſhamefully ſhe was diſturbed by the deſtroyer ARIMANIUS, who diſſolved her laws, and ſet her at variance with herſelf.

H.

LETTER XCIX.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

AS I am ſenſible my public diſpatches are always read before the council of ſeven, and afterwards regiſtered in the archives; I would not in them mention an affair, which gives me ſome uneaſineſs, and which I intend only for thy knowledge. My brother HIPPIAS encloſed in his laſt packet the following ſentence out of a letter from HYDASPES the chamberlain to him. "Tell CLEANDER, his merit has "raiſed him many enemies, who endeavour to ſup- "plant him in the favour of the miniſters. The "practices of the great are buſy againſt him. I have "not at preſent time to write more." My friends have ſent me no advices of this nature; and yet the myſterious brevity of this paragraph ſtrangely con-

ſounds me. I know not any of the courtiers, to whom I ever gave the leaſt ground of offence; at the ſame time I cannot underſtand the conduct of TERIBAZUS the treaſurer. He has never once wrote to me ſince I reſided at Athens, though he made me large promiſes of friendſhip before I left Ecbatana; and for this laſt year I have never received a ſingle mina of my appointments. If the former liberalities of MEGABYZUS and thy ſelf had not ſupported me, I ſhould have been reduced to great diſtreſs.

Next to the protection of OROMASDES, generous GOBRYAS, I depend upon thine. Thou wert never yet known to diſappoint the meaneſt of thy dependants. I will therefore reſt aſſured, that thou wilt not ſuffer a friend to be run down by court-faction, who may venture to ſay, that he has not been uſeleſs to the country, which employed him. Adieu.

From Athens. P.

LETTER C.

ORSAMES to CLEANDER.

I HAVE in a former letter obſerved to thee, CLEANDER, that the peculiar regard, which the Egyptians ſhew to the remains of their deceaſed friends, proceeded upon a perſuaſion of the ſoul's ſubſiſting after its ſeparation from the body; an opinion, which has ſo generally obtained in all nations of the world, that one

one may with better reaſon conclude it is inherent in the human ſoul from a conſciouſneſs of it's own immortality, than that it was diſcovered firſt by the Egyptians, and derived by them to the reſt of mankind. But however that be, they doubtleſs were the firſt, who accommodated this doctrine to the groſs conceptions of the vulgar; and this gave riſe to the ſuperſtitious repreſentations in their funeral ſolemnities, which are performed near Memphis in a large parcel of ground ſet apart for that purpoſe, and called the territory of the dead. * It conſiſts of ſeveral large and pleaſant meadows, encompaſſed with groves of lotus and ſweet canes, and watered with many clear rivulets and fountains from the ſerpentine windings of the Nile. But the dead are not admitted, nor ſuppoſed to be admitted to this place, until they have paſſed the ſolemn tribunal, to which they are conveyed in a boat acroſs a great lake called Acheruſia. Before the coffin is put aboard, any perſon is at liberty by the law to accuſe the dead; and if it can be proved, that the deceaſed led a wicked life, then the judges appointed for that purpoſe give ſentence, and the body is refuſed an honourable burial. If no informer appears, or the information is proved falſe, all the kindred of the deceaſed leave off mourning, and begin to ſet forth his praiſes, and recount the virtues, wherein he excelled, invoking the infernal deities to receive

* DIOD. SICUL. L. I. c. 7.

him into the ſociety of the juſt. On one ſide of the lake is the temple of the infernal HECATE, and the gates of COCYTUS and LETHE made faſt with brazen bars; on the other the pleaſant iſlands and meadows before mentioned, where thoſe, who are abſolved at this tribunal, have a right to be interred, if their friends deſire it; but whether their bodies are depoſited there or not, they repreſent the calm, or happy ſtate, into which ſuch perſons are received in the Amenthes or inviſible region of departed ſouls. I have already hinted to you, that their doctrine of the ſoul's immortality is blended with that of its ſucceſſive revolution through different bodies. * The Amenthes therefore, or their name for the inviſible region, ſignifies a place, that receives the ſouls, and ſends them back again. In that ſtate the good after their removal from the body are ſuppoſed to be in a quiet and unruffled ſituation. † But it is not till after they have paſſed through their ſeveral ſucceſſive revolutions, and have returned again into the human body, and not till after a ſecond ſeparation from it, that they are ſuppoſed to paſs into an happy ſtate, if they have

* Τὸν ὑποχθόνιον τόπον εἰς ὃν οἴονται τὰς ψυχὰς ἀπέρχεσθαι μετὰ τὴν τελευτὴν Ἀμένθην καλοῦσι· σημαίνοντες τοῦ ὀνόματος τὸν λαμβάνοντα καὶ διδόντα. PLUT. de Iſid. p. 362.

† Ἐις δὲ τοῦτο φαῦλος μὲν οὐδεὶς οὐδὲ ἀκάθαρτος ἄνεισιν· οἱ δὲ χρηστοὶ μετὰ τὴν τελευτὴν κομισθέντες, αὐτόθι ῥᾶστον μὲν οὕτω βίον, οὐ μὴν μακάριον οὐδὲ θεῖον ἔχοντες ἄχρι τοῦ δευτέρου θανάτου διατελοῦσι. PLUT. de facie in lunâ, p. 942.

acted

acted their part virtuouſly in this the ſecond time as they did before. But the notion of the ſoul's tranſmigrating through various kinds of bodies, I have reaſon to think, was a later improvement of their philoſophy; and I conceive the more ancient doctrine to have been rather this, viz. that they ſhould return again to act their part in an human body at the great mundane revolution. When in our way to the Labyrinth we ſtopped to ſurvey the three great pyramids, that ſtand between Memphis and Arſinoe, it was impoſſible not to reflect, upon what principle they could be erected. They might perhaps be contrived for other purpoſes of their religion beſides the intombing of the dead: but however that be, 'tis certain the founders of them intended their remains ſhould be depoſited therein. A deſire indeed of perpetuating their names by ſome laſting monuments might be natural to the Egyptian kings, as well as thoſe of other nations; yet 'tis peculiar to Egypt to boaſt of a more expenſive magnificence in theſe monuments than in the palaces of the living. And by deſigning to be buried within the pyramids, places of ſuch impenetrable ſtrength as were never erected for the defence of the living, one muſt ſuppoſe, they intended to ſecure their remains againſt the injuries of time, or hoſtile fury in thoſe eternal habitations. And does not this peculiarity appear of a piece with that of their being more ſolicitous than any other people, to preſerve their bodies from putrefaction, by ſalting and embalming them, which is an art original to Egypt?

Both the one and the other peculiarity may, I believe, be accounted for upon the ſame principle, which CHERES an Egyptian prieſt ſuggeſted to us in ſome diſcourſe we had upon this ſubject. It was the ancient opinion, that the ſouls delighted to hover about thoſe places, where the bodies were depoſited, * with good hopes of returning again into their own, if thoſe bodies could be preſerved until the great period came round. But in caſe they mouldered away, or were deſtroyed by violence, their ſoul would be allotted to ſome new body, and in that again expoſed to all the ſame hazards of vice and pollution it had happily eſcaped in the firſt. † The Egyptians in their ſymbolical way expreſs the permanent and incorruptible nature of the ſoul by certain immutable proportions of number; from whence PYTHAGORAS, they ſay, learnt to call it a ſelf-moving number, expreſſing in a myſtical ſenſe mind, or an eſſence, that had nothing in it of matter, which is flux and changeable. Some believe the pyramidal form to be expreſſive of certain ſacred and myſtical doctrines; but I think it more natural to ſuppoſe, that in thoſe monuments, which were intended to endure through a long courſe of ages, it was pitched upon principally, as being a

* Ægyptii periti ſapientiæ condita diutius reſervant cadavera, ſcil. ut anima multo tempore perduret, & corpori ſit obnoxia, ne cito ad aliud tranſeat. SERVII Comment. in v. 67. Æneid. L. III.

† —— τὸν δ' ἀριθμὸν ἑαυτὸν κινοῦντα, τὸν δ' ἀριθμὸν ἀντὶ τοῦ νοῦ παραλαμβάνει. PLUT. de placit. L. IV. c. 2.

form

form the moſt permanent and laſting. It might moreover be deſigned in honour to the chief objects of their worſhip; for pyramids and obeliſks have been very ancient repreſentations of the celeſtial divinities, by alluſion to the pyramidal or conical forms, in which the rays are emitted from a luminous body. * The pyramids I ſaw ſtand upon the brow of a rocky hill, which riſes in a gentle aſcent from the level plains by Memphis, but the ſame rock is continued weſtward to the ſteep mountains of Lybia. Each ſide of the greateſt pyramid contains about ſeven hundred Grecian feet in length; the ſides aſcend by rows riſing like ſtairs from the bottom to the top. The height is computed to be pretty near equal to the baſe. † The river enters by a ſecret channel into a great ſubterraneous vault underneath this pyramid; and in the middle of that receptacle is an inſular fabric, where the king's body, who finiſhed the pyramid, was intended to be intombed. A great cauſeway, paved in ſome places with granate marble, lies from the banks of the Nile to the brow of the hill, whereon this pyramid ſtands. Southward about a bow-ſhot from this, we meet with another, the next in magnitude, but which falls ſhort of the dimenſions of the firſt; neither are the ſtones, which compoſe it, of ſo vaſt a ſize. The ſides riſe not by degrees like that, but are a ſmooth ſliding plain from the

* GREAVES's Pyramidographia.

† HEROD. Euterp.

bottom

bottom to the top. * It is bounded by the North and Weſt with a row of cells, the whole like a regular fabric, hewn out in the hard rock. † On the Weſt ſide likewiſe of the great pyramid is a large pile of building of the Biſaltes ſtone; from whence as from the cells round the ſecond are ſecret paſſages into both, but through them only the prieſts or the initiated ever enter. South Eaſt is the famous Sphinx, an immenſe Coloſſus, computed to be in length one hundred and forty three feet, in height ſixty two, and one hundred and two in compaſs about the head. It was undoubtedly erected there to expreſs the ſeaſon of the inundation. The third pyramid ſtands diſtant from the ſecond about a furlong, upon an advantageous height, whereby afar off it appears equal to the former, though indeed the whole pile is much leſs and lower; yet for the ſtructure and beauty of the marble excels both that and the great one. Cloſe adjoining to it on the Eaſt ſide is another building of a dark ſtone like Thebaic marble. At a diſtance we could diſcern to the South ſeveral other pyramids, which lie ſcattered through a deſert tract on the confines of Lybia, and are found all along the upper region to the borders of Ethiopia; many of which I ſaw in my paſſage the laſt year down the Nile; but moſt of them, though very durable in their kind, were the work of earlier and more ſimple ages, when

* GREAVES, ubi ſupra.

† Id. ibid.

the

the Egyptians were rather deſirous to preſerve their remains inviolable, than ambitious to leave conſpicuous monuments of their ſtate and magnificence. They were erected by the ancient kings of the Thinite dynaſty, or in their times. However there is, I am told, one among them, which nearly equals in its dimenſions the largeſt of theſe by Memphis. Next in antiquity to thoſe, and more ancient than theſe, are two admirable pyramids ſtanding in the middle of the great lake of Mœris. For CHEMMIS (whom HERODOTUS uſes to call CHEOPS, making a Greek name of the Egyptian) who is reputed the founder of the firſt of theſe by Memphis, was among the deſcendants or ſucceſſors of SESOSTRIS; and SESOSTRIS himſelf was later than Mœris. CEPHREN and MYCERINUS, to whom the ſecond and third are aſcribed, were one the brother, the other a ſon of CHEMMIS. The great lake of Mœris was contrived for a balance to the waters in the annual inundation. And there is a communication from the river to the lake by a great ditch eighty furlongs in length, and three hundred feet in breadth, by which it may receive the ſuperfluity of water, when the Nile riſes to an exceſſive height, as by opening its other ſluices the country a great diſtance round it may be ſupplied in ſeaſons, when the river fails. And though the expence of opening and ſhutting the ſluices be very great, yet it is certainly a work of the greateſt benefit to Egypt. In the midſt of the lake the king contrived a place for his ſepulchre, and

rais'd

rais'd two ſtately pyramids, the one for himſelf, the other for his wife; and upon the ſummit of each he placed a coloſſus of marble ſitting upon a throne. From the foundation the pyramids are a hundred fathoms high; they are ſeen fifty fathoms above the water, and are hid as many fathoms under it; ſo that the lake is in ſome places three hundred feet in depth, and, as HERODOTUS perſuades me, was all made by art. The circumference is computed at three thouſand ſix hundred furlongs. It lies about ſix hundred furlongs above the city of Memphis. We paſſed in a boat acroſs this lake to the Labyrinth, which is ſaid to have been built by joint conſent of the twelve kings, who reigned in Egypt after the expulſion of SETHON the prieſt of VULCAN. The fabric is the moſt wonderful in its kind in all the world, from which DÆDALUS received the model of the much famed labyrinth he built in Crete. The ſubterraneous apartments were all cut by hand in the ſolid rock; which might paſs for an incredible ſtory, were it not conſidered, that the whole rock is a ſand ſtone, which contributes to the preſervation of the bodies depoſited within it. And in theſe wonderful apartments are the * *gabbares* or mummies of the twelve kings

* So the embalmed bodies were called in the language of the country, as St. AUGUSTIN confirms: "Morem "enim habent ſiccare corpora, & quaſi ænea reddere; "Gabbaras ea vocant." AUG. ſerm. 120. de diverſis. Note by the tranſlator.

who

who built the labyrinth, with the remains of crocodiles, and other their ſacred animals. But if the labour and expence of ſinking pits, and excavating vaults in the ſolid rock, or raiſing ſuch immenſe piles of ſtone above ground to ſecure the human remains from the violence of after ages, may be in ſome ſort accounted for upon a perſuaſion they firmly maintain with regard to the ſoul's revolution; yet their paying an equal regard to the remains of the moſt noxious animals can be reſolved into nothing but the moſt extravagant phrenſy and ſuperſtition. The whole nome, which takes its name from the neighbouring town of Arſinoe, pays an extravagant veneration to crocodiles. Theſe are embalmed with moſt exquiſite art, and ſet up in niches, as the bodies of birds and other animals are through every part of the ſubterraneous chambers. At the angle where the labyrinth ends, there is a pyramid of two hundred and forty feet in height, with a baſis of the ſame dimenſions, on which are engraved Coloſſean figures of animals: the paſſage that leads to it is under ground. The ſeveral corridors and intricate paſſages of the labyrinth below ſeem to anſwer, as near as we could compare them together, to the apartments above; of which as I know HERODOTUS has given the exacteſt deſcription poſſible, I will not be tedious in endeavouring it after him. It was by a very particular intereſt with CHERES the Egyptian prieſt, who accompanied us in this tour, that I gained admittance into the apartments under ground, which HERODOTUS himſelf

himſelf was denied ſeeing the firſt time that he travelled into Egypt. But I muſt have been initiated to have entered the pyramids; the preparations for which I have no time now to go through.

I write this from Sais, a city of ancient note in the Delta, the curioſities of which, after I have taken a regular ſurvey of them, may furniſh out another letter to you, before I begin my voyage for Greece. But I willingly confeſs, CLEANDER, that you are ſo well inſtructed in the philoſophy and learning of thoſe ſages, who were moſt converſant in the recondite doctrines of Egypt, that I have correſponded with you more for my own ſake, than for any information I could hope to give you from the little I have gained by my inquiries. HERODOTUS ſaid upon ſeeing your epiſtle on the Eleuſinian myſteries, "This Epheſian "has diſcovered more of thoſe ſecrets by a ſhrewd "induction from ſome ſlight and unguarded hints "of his Athenian friends, than any ought to know, "who is not an initiate, or than an initiate ſhould "dare to reveal:" and he hath religiouſly omitted the very mention of them in his hiſtory. Adieu.

From Sais. L.

End of the Second Volume.

REFERENCES *to be added to* LETTERS LXXX *and* LXXXVIII.

VOL. II.

LETTER LXXX.

PAGE 130. *Line* 21. The common ſtory of ALEXANDER and APELLES is by ÆLIAN, Var. hiſt. lib. 2. cap. 2. told of MEGABYZUS and ZEUXIS.

P. 131. *L.* 1. POLYCLETUS DIADUMENUM fecit molliter juvenem, & DORYPHORUM viriliter puerum. PLIN. lib. 34. § 19. *L.* 9. Athenienſes illos Hermas ALCIBIADIS ad corporis ſimilitudinem fabricatos. ARNOB. adverſus gentes. lib. 6. *L.* 12. De Cupidine fulmen tenente id affirmatur, ALCIBIADEM eſſe principem formâ in ea ætate. PLIN. lib. 36. § 4. *L.* 19. ANDROBIUS pinxit SCYLLIN ancoras Perſicæ claſſis præcidentem. PLIN. lib. 35. § 40. *L.* 30. Cum prælium navale Ægyptiorum & Perſarum pinxiſſet, quod in Nilo, cujus aqua eſt mari ſimilis, factum volebat intelligi, argumento declaravit, quod arte non poterat; aſellum enim in littore bibentem pinxit, & crocodilum inſidiantem ei. PLIN. ibid. So N. POUSSIN ſhewed, that his ſcene lay in Ægypt.

P. 132. *L.* 5. PLUTARCH in PERICLE. *L.* 8. CTESILAUS—Olympium PERICLEM dignum cognomine. Mirumque in hac arte eſt, quod nobiles viros nobiliores fecit. PLIN. lib. 34. §. 19. *L.* 21. The verſes are quoted by PLUTARCH in PERICLE. *L.* 25. Petulanti picturâ innotuit, JOVE Liberum parturiente depicto mitrato, & muliebriter ingemiſcente inter obſtetricia dearum. PLIN. lib. 35. § 40.

P. 133.

P. 133. *L.* 8. MYRONEM——bucula maximè nobilitavit, celebratis verſibus laudata. PLIN. lib. 34. § 19. *L.* 14. Æginetico ære MYRON uſus eſt, Deliaco POLYCLETUS, æquales atque condiſcipuli: æmulatio iis & in materiâ fuit. Ibid. § 5. *L.* 16. Like the famous lion of RUBENS. *L.* 20. Leæna, aligerique ludentes cum eâ Cupidines; quorum alii religatam tenerent, alii e cornu cogerent bibere, alii calcearent ſoccis. PLIN. lib. 36. § 4. The boys like FIAMINGO's.

L. 25. Pinxit PARRHASIUS Δῆμον Athenienſium, argumento quoque ingenioſo; volebat namque varium, iracundum, injuſtum, inconſtantem, eundem exorabilem, clementem, miſericordem, excelſum, glorioſum, humilem, ferocem, fugacemque, & omnia pariter oſtendere. PLIN. lib. 35. § 36.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

P. 187. *L.* 16. PARRHASIO nemo inſolentius & arrogantius uſus eſt gloriâ artis——ergo magnis ſuffragiis ſuperatus a TIMANTHE Sami, in AJACE armorumque judicio, Herois nomine ſe moleſte ferre dicebat, quod iterum ab indigno victus eſſet. PLIN. lib. 35. § 36. *L.* 24. Confeſſione artificum in lineis extremis palmam adeptus.—— Extrema corporum facere, & definentis picturæ modum includere, rarum in ſucceſſu artis invenitur: ambire enim debet ſe extremitas ipſa, & ſic definere, ut promittat alia poſt ſe. ibid. *L.* 27. Ne colorum claritas oculorum aciem offenderet, veluti per lapidem ſpecularem intuentibus e longinquo; & eadem res nimis floridis coloribus auſteritatem occulte daret. Ibid.

P. 188. *L.* 2. Qui primus in pictura marem fœminamque diſcrevit, EUMARUM——& CIMONEM Cleonæum: Hic catagrapha invenit, hoc eſt obliquas imagines, & variè formare

mare vultus, reſpicientes, ſuſpicienteſque, & deſpicientes. Ib. 34. ARDICES Corinthius——quos pingeret, adſcribere inſtitutum. Ib. 5.

P. 189. *L.* 1. Φίλιππος ὁ Κωμωδιδάσκαλος φησὶ, τὸν Δαίδαλον κινεμένην ποιῆσαι τὴν ξυλίνην Ἀφροδίτην, ἐγχέαντα Ἀργυρον χυτόν. ARISTOT. de Anima. Somewhat like the Japonneſe puppet, ſhewn at MARGAS's in 1740. *L.* 9. Still found in the kingdom of Naples and in Tuſcany. *L.* 16. Πάσας ἐκδιδάξας ἡμᾶς ἐν τῷ συγγράμματι τὰς συμμετρίας τῦ σώματος ὁ Πολύκλειτος, ἔργῳ τὸν λόγον ἐβεβαίωσε, δημιεργήσας Ἀνδρίαντα κατὰ τὰ τῦ λόγυ προστάγματα, καὶ καλέσας δὴ καὶ αὐτὸν τὸν Ἀνδριάντα, καθάπερ καὶ τὸ συγγράμμα, Κάνονα. Galen. περὶ τῶν καθ' Ἱπποκρ καὶ Πλατ. *L.* 25. STIPAX Cyprius uno celebratur ſigno, Splanchnopte; PERICLIS Olympii vernula hic fuit, exta torrens, ignem oris pleni ſpiritu accendens, PLIN. lib. 34. § 19. *L.* 29. PYREÏCUS arte paucis poſtferendus,——humilia ſecutus, humilitatis ſummam adeptus eſt gloriam: tonſtrinas ſutrinaſque pinxit, & aſellos & obſonia ac ſimilia,——in iis conſummatæ voluptatis; quippe eæ pluris venière, quam maximæ multorum. PLIN. lib. 35. § 37. Like REMBRANDT and TENIERS.

P. 190. *L.* 9. This is told of APELLES by PLINY, lib. 35. § 36. but is more likely to be true of ſuch a painter as PYREÏCUS. *L.* 14. Encauſticæ picturæ extitêre POLYGNOTI. Ib. 39. *L.* 19. PLUTARCH in CIMONE. *L.* 20. Like the vaſes and ornaments of POLYDORE and JULIO ROMANO. *L.* 28. Pæni ex auro factitavêre & clypeos & imagines, ſecumque in caſtra tulêre. Faciem reddi in ſcuto cujuſque, qui fuerit uſus illo. PLIN. lib. 35. § 4.

P. 191. *L.* 11. PLUTARCH. in PERICLE. *L.* 20. PANÆNUS——prælium apud Marathona factum pinxit;—— in eo prælio Ionicos duces pinxiſſe traditur, Athenienſium MILTIADEM,

MILTIADEM, &c. Barbarorum DATIM, ARTAPHERNEM. PLIN. lib. 35. § 34.

P. 192. *L.* 12. ZEUXIS donare opera ſua inſtituit, quod ea nullo ſatis digno pretio permutari poſſe diceret. lb. 36. *L.* 19. Charites in Propylæo Athenienſium non poſtferuntur, quas SOCRATES fecit. PLIN. lib. 36. § 4.

P. 193. *L.* 6. Miris laudibus celebrant & TELEPHANEM Phoceum, ignotum aliàs, quoniam in Theſſalia habitaverit, ubi latuerint opera ejus; alioqui——æquatur POLYCTETO, MYRONI, PYTHAGORÆ. Laudant ejus Lariſſam.——Alii non hanc ignobilitatis fuiſſe cauſam, ſed quoniam ſe regum XERXIS & DARII officinis dediderit, exiſtimant. PLIN. lib. 34. § 19.

ADDENDA to the Corrections in the First Volume.

ERRATA in the Preface.

PAGE 3. Line 11. for *thoſe* read *theſe*.

P. 5. l. 13. for *the* r. *this*.

P. 8. l. 18. for *entertain* r. *gather*.

References omitted in the Preface.

P. 8. l. 3. Let an aſteriſk be made at the word * *D'oſſat's*, referring to this note at the bottom of the page: * *V. Wicquef. compl. Emb.* Sect. 10. *B.* 2.

Ibid. l. 13. At the word * *Joſephus* let an aſteriſk be made, and inſert the following note at the bottom of the page. * *V. Joſeph. con. Appion. where he endeavours to leſſen the credit of the Greek hiſtorians.*

P. 9. l. 12. Place an aſteriſk at the word * *Atoſſa*, referring to this note in the margin: * *V. Bentley againſt Boyle, p.* 535.

ERRATA in the Contents.

Letter XVII. For *Smerdis the Magi* r. *Smerdis the Mage.*

Letter XLVII. For *Hermatic* r. *Hermetic.*

ERRATA in the Letters.

P. 3. l. 20. For *where* r. *were.*

P. 13. l. ult. Dele *other.*

P. 17. l. 14. Dele *ſo.*

P. 19. l. 13. For *delightful* r. *agreeable.*

P. 19. marg. note. For ix r. ὡν.

P. 21. l. 2. Dele *happy.*

P. 37. l. 24. For *part of the city* r. *ſpot without the city.*

P. 67. l. 3. Dele *melancholy.*

P. 76. l. 1. Dele ſemicolon [;] inſert a full point [.]

Ibid. l. 4. Dele full point [.] inſert a comma [,]

P. 83. marg. note. For ὑμιμυῖναι r. ὑπομυῖναι. Dele after ταρταρον the Greek colon [·] inſert a comma [,].

P. 84. marg. note. Dele after ἐκεῖνον the Greek colon [·].

P. 88. l. 2. Dele *with the moſt plentiful ſtock of railing.*

P. 93. l. 27. Inſtead of *to turn the ſcale, whenever we effectually interpoſe*, r. *to turn the ſcale effectually, whenever we interpoſe.*

P. 98. l. 4. For *reflection* r. *reverberation.*

P. 101. l. 13. After the word *ſtrength* add *of argument.*

P. 116. l. 5. After the word *himſelf* inſert a ſemicolon [;] inſtead of a comma.

P. 118. l. 29. For a comma inſert a ſemicolon.

P. 121. l. ult. From the word *beſides* to *gods* in p. 122 ſhould be included in a parenthеſis.

P. 127. l. 27. For *no* read *on.*

Ibid. l. 29. Dele *other.*

P. 148. l. 19. For *philoſophical opinions* r. *theological matters.*

P. 150. l. 19. Inſtead of *where the truth begins, or the fable concludes.* r. *where the fable concludes, or the truth begins.*

P. 156. l. 3. After the word *obſervation* inſert *was.*

P. 160.

P. 160. l. ult. After the word *methods* insert a comma.
P. 162. l. 11. After the word *next* insert a comma.
P. 164. Insert *yet* in the beginning of the first line.
P. 165. l. 5. After *exceed* insert *them*.
P. 166. l. 4. Dele *the square of*.
Ib. l. 7. Dele *which is entirely of one stone*.
Ib. l. 12. Dele *of one entire stone*.
P. 167. l. 21. Dele *natural*.
P. 182. l. 22. For *where* r. *were*.
P. 193. l. 3. For *Magi* r. *Mage*.
Ib. l. 23. After the word *been* insert *brought*.
P. 200. l. 20. For *the* r. *their*.
P. 208. l. 22. After *be* insert *the*.
P. 216. l. 3. Dele *seem*.
P. 219. l. 25. After *be* insert *as*.
P. 220. l. 1. For *Elesian* r. *Etesian*.
Ib. l. ult. For *there* r. *these*.
P. 226. l. 28. For *throne of the* r. *throne of that*, &c.
P. 230. l. 5. After *excite* insert *to*.
P. 235. l. 29. After *services and* insert *the*.

ERRATA in this Second Volume.

PAGE 4. Line. 4. For *disposing them*, read *disposing of them*.
P. 26. l. 1. Include the words (*who is always one or more of the Strategoi elected annually by the people*) in a parenthesis, and dele the full point, and begin the next word *The* with a small letter.
P. 29. l. 16. Dele *both*.
P. 31. Add the mark *P.* at the end of Letter LX.
P. 54. l. 16. For *Elusis* r. *Eleusis*.
P. 61. l. 8. Before the word *which* insert, *where he presents them with bread, wine, and salt*.
P. 64. l. 14. For *dististinguishes* r. *distinguishes*.
P. 78. l. 23. Dele the word *time* which is repeated.
P. 85. l. 4. Dele the word *like* which is repeated.
P. 108. l. 20. For *doctine* r. *doctrine*.
P. 143. l. antepenult. For *treatre* r. *theatre*.
P. 190. l. 12. For *for* r. *from*.
P. 208. l. 26. Dele *as to*.
P. 238. l. 16. For Βοεδρομιών r. Βουδρομιών.
P. 242. l. 17. For *insolences* r. *insolence*.
P. 243. l. 1. For *religions* r. *religion*.
P. 247. l. 6. For *designed* r. *deigned*.

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